Research Report

SUMMARIES OF RESEARCH REPORTS

VOLUME V

1986 - 1987

Northern Alberta Development Council

April 1988

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Introduction

The Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) has long been developing avenues of communication in which the people of northern Alberta can express their ideas and concerns regarding development of the North. In addition to public meetings and major conferences, the Council carries out relevant, practically-orientated research in an effort to have good information on hand to make timely and relevant recommendations to the Alberta government.

During the years 1986 and 1987 the Council sponsored or co-sponsored some nineteen studies examining a wide variety of topics. The following pages contain summaries of all of the studies completed during that two-year time period. Each executive summary is structured in a similar format, including discussions under each of the following areas:

- Background and purpose
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Principal findings
- Conclusions and recommendations

Also, attention has been given to include bibliographic details of each report on the individual summary title pages. It must be emphasized that the summaries have been written by staff members of the Northern Development Branch, and in many cases this has been done without the benefit of comments from the respective authors. Any errors or misrepresentations of details of these research projects are therefore the responsibility of the Branch. Unfortunately, most summaries do not capture the context and the dynamism that are often present in the complete reports. Readers are encouraged to consult the relevant study for further detail.

The topics covered in this volume are very diverse. Each project has its own unique history. Some projects originated from briefs submitted by members of the public to the NADC during the Council's bi-monthly public meetings held throughout northern Alberta. Other projects evolved from the recommendations of seminars and conferences sponsored by the NADC. Still others came about following resolutions adopted by the NADC after several months of meetings and discussions on a particular topic. Research projects sponsored by the Council are often a reflection of long-term goals and priorities for northern development.

The following additional points may assist the reader:

- The NADC is inclined toward action-oriented and problem-oriented research. For the Council, research is not an end in itself, but a means by which application of social and natural sciences can assist in the task of promoting improvements in the quality of life for northern Albertans.

- All of the research has been sponsored directly or indirectly by the NADC or its secretariat, the Northern Development Branch. Some of the projects were completed by Branch staff, while others were contracted out to consultant firms. The decision to use external consultants as opposed to in-house research capabilities is related to the purpose of the project, the time constraints of the Northern Development Branch, and the desire of Council to support private sector research companies.

- Over the years, the Northern Alberta Development Council has been listening to northerners through a variety of media. One of the recurrent messages Council hears is that as much information as possible should be made public. This is particularly true when citizens of the north give of their time and energy to answer surveys or meet with interviewers.

The Northern Alberta Development Council is very much aware of some of the concerns that arise from conducting research. A major Research Review Seminar sponsored by Council in June of 1981 addressed a number of research concerns, including information dissemination, action on results, community reaction to "yet another study", and possible concerns of government agencies. A Council document entitled Guidelines for Research in Northern Alberta attempts to address many of these topics.

Executive summaries of research projects are available in five volumes:

Volume I: 1975-79
Volume II: 1980-82
Volume III: 1983-84
Volume IV: 1984-85
Volume V: 1986-87

As well, an index of research is available which lists all of the projects sponsored or co-sponsored by the Northern Alberta Development Council from 1975 to 1987.

Requests for the index, the summaries, or any reports should be directed to the following address:

Northern Alberta Development Council
Bag 900-14
Peace River, Alberta
T0H 2X0

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

The Valleyview and District Human Needs Study

Written by: McQ Enterprises Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta

December, 1985

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

The Valleyview and District Human Needs Committee was established by the Valleyview Inter-Agency Group in 1985. The committee investigates problems and identifies possible strategies related to the provision of health and social services for residents of the area. The Committee retained a consultant, McQ Enterprises Ltd., to study and report on human services for the senior citizens and young adults in the Valleyview area. Human services are defined as those which maintain or improve the health and well-being of people.

The Valleyview and District Human Needs Study identified the following purpose:

> To identify and describe the extent of existing and potential social and health care problems affecting particular target groups in the Valleyview area (as defined by Hospital, Auxiliary and Nursing Home District #96) and suggest strategies through which these problems may be addressed by the Human Needs Committee.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To describe the present population, particularly in the age groups of 15 to 24 years and 65 years and older
- To project the future population in the age groups of 15 to 24 years and 65 years and older
- To identify the health and social services presently available in the Valleyview area in the broad categories of long-term care, health promotion, preventive social services and acute treatment services

- To identify the service needs, particularly for senior citizens and young adults

- To project the future needs for services identified above for the target groups specified

- To recommend short-term and long-term service development strategies for action by the Human Needs Committee

Methodology

The study was done using the Community Development Method. This method provides a practical and economical means of conducting community needs studies and emphasizes community involvement.

The Valleyview and District Human Needs Committee participated in the planning of the study. Its members also collected data, provided valuable input to the study questionnaire and reviewed drafts of the report.

A questionnaire was designed and pre-tested and then distributed to service providers and community advocates in the study area. A total of 89 organizations and community advocates were invited to respond to the study questionnaire and 58 replied.

Principal Findings

Valleyview Area

The Valleyview area is a large and lightly-populated region in northwestern Alberta, economically dependent upon agriculture and the petroleum industry.

Population

The percentage of the area's population in the young adult target group is the same as the provincial average, but the percentage of elderly people in the area is lower than average. As there are no local long-term care services for this target group, the elderly often must leave for other centres. (Once more local services for the elderly are available, they will be more likely to stay in the community.)

Existing Services for Senior Citizens and Young Adults

At present there are some services for the elderly in the Valleyview area. According to questionnaire responses, the elderly are included in the populations served by organizations in all four categories established by the planning framework: preventive, bridging, treatment, and care services. A few organizations serve the elderly exclusively.

Young adults are also included among those served by organizations in these categories, although there appears to be no organization which serves this target group exclusively.

Increasing Demand for Services

All responding organizations have been experiencing steady or increasing demand for their services at a time when the population in the Valleyview area has not been increasing. Questionnaire respondents expect this trend to continue for a number of reasons, including:

- Social changes affecting the family and the work force
- The longer life span and the desire of the elderly to remain in their own communities
- Increasing awareness by the public of the availability, benefits, and need for services
- Changes in government policy

Conclusions and Recommendations

Considering the priorities identified by the questionnaire respondents and in light of the framework developed for human services planning, provincial planning guidelines and selected literature, it is concluded that:

- An auxiliary hospital will meet many of the needs of senior citizens for care services.
- More physician and physiotherapy services will address many of the needs of senior citizens for additional treatment services.
- The year-round recreational and fitness facility may address preventive services needs within both target groups.
- Health education will address preventive services needs within both target groups.

In addition to recommending these service development priorities, the report makes 22 other specific recommendations for action. These suggest short and long-term strategies for the Human Needs Committee, in cooperation with local organizations, to further develop human services in the Valleyview area.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Preliminary Directional Study: Canada/Alberta Northern Development Subsidiary Agreement

Written by: Nichols Applied Management
Edmonton, Alberta
and
Fresh Start Social Consultants Limited
Edmonton, Alberta

March, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Development Branch

Background

In mid-1984, the governments of Canada and Alberta jointly signed an Economic and Regional Development Agreement (ERDA) which is intended to provide a ten-year framework for cooperative planning and programming in the area of economic and regional development. The specified objectives of the ERDA are as follows:

- Tailor federal programs and policies to the development opportunities and priorities of the Province
- Create mutually supportive and reinforcing development activities
- Strengthen multi-departmental coordination within and between the two governments
- Reduce duplication and unnecessary regulation

The agreement identified the existence of regional disparities in the province and concluded that a priority objective would be to improve the level of development in northern Alberta and, in particular, the remote communities of that region. In this context, the two levels of government agreed to negotiate a subsidiary agreement, which would be designed to relieve the disparate socio-economic conditions in that geographic area. Consequently, the Canada/Alberta Subsidiary Agreement on Northern Development was signed October 2, 1985 by the federal Department of Regional Industrial Expansion and the provincial Department of Tourism and Small Business.

Under the new agreement, $40 million will be spent over the next five years on projects promoting economic development in northern Alberta. The agreement follows two earlier sub-agreements (covering the period 1974 to 1983) under which Canada and Alberta jointly participated in a $69 million program to foster socio-economic development in the northern part of the province.

The stated purpose of the agreement is "to enable Canada and Alberta to better coordinate their respective efforts in encouraging the economic development of the northern region of Alberta and to provide the residents of the North real options and opportunities to contribute and participate in these developments". The specific objectives of the new agreement are as follows:

- To increase the diversity and extent of economic, business, and industrial activity in the North and increase participation of northern businesses in renewable and non-renewable resource-based developments

- To prepare and assist northern residents, particularly in the remote north, to access community, business and industrial development opportunities

- To develop the community and regional environment and infra-structure which will improve the long-term viability of economic, business and industrial activity

A federal-provincial advisory committee has been formed as a vehicle to provide program advice for the agreement. The committee is comprised of representatives from the following government agencies or departments:

Province of Alberta	Government of Canada
Co-Moderator: Northern Development Branch	Co-Moderator: Regional Industrial Expansion
Alberta Municipal Affairs	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Alberta Manpower	Employment and Immigration Canada
Alberta Transportation	Agriculture Canada
Alberta Economic Development (Small Business)	Transport Canada

Purpose

This study was commissioned to provide initial guidance to the agreement advisory committee regarding:

- Existing economic issues or problems that are not being adequately addressed in northern Alberta at the present time
- Coordination problems among government delivery agencies, the duplication of programs and service gaps all of which may impede the efficient delivery of program support and the realization of improved economic standards in the north

It is intended that the issues and implications brought forth in the study will serve as a starting point for the committee in their assessment of:

- Existing programs which may need to be modified to meet economic development objectives in the north
- Gaps which cannot be addressed by existing programs but may be filled by projects funded under the agreement
- Opportunities where the agreement could be used to bridge existing programs

Methodology

The first activity undertaken was the preparation of a comprehensive list of programs which are presently delivered in northern Alberta specifically relating to economic, industrial and business development, human resources development and infrastructure support. A list of particularly relevant agencies and programs was developed from the comprehensive tabulation. A proposed interview list was prepared and provided to committee representatives for approval.

The study team then reviewed available background reports which examined socio-economic problems in the north. The consultants drew from these reports, their own extensive experience in the region and various issues and hypotheses which could be tested and possibly corroborated during the personal interviews.

A general set of questions was developed to guide the interviewers in drawing out:

- Program objectives of the delivery agency
- Future program directions
- Extent of coordination with other agencies
- Program gaps and overlaps
- Policies regarding financial leveraging from other sources
- Responses to hypotheses developed independently by the study team regarding issues of concern in respective program areas

Approximately forty interviews, the majority of these in person, were completed. The information gathered from the interviews, the findings from relevant research reports, the NADC briefs, and the hypotheses independently developed by the study team, were synthesized and categorized. An interim report which identified key problem areas pertaining to program delivery in the north, together with related implications, was presented to the federal-provincial advisory committee.

Regional focus group sessions took place in six northern communities. These sessions served as a mechanism for local business people, representatives of northern organizations, politicians, native leaders and program delivery personnel to voice their views on programming issues.

Following the focus group sessions, a member of the study team attended two information meetings organized by the Agreement Review Committee in Edmonton. Representatives of federal and provincial government agencies, as well as private and quasi-public organizations operating in the north, met and identified northern needs related to economic development and ways to address those needs.

Principal Findings

The report identifies a considerable number of program delivery issues.

Program Marketing and Awareness

A major concern which embraces virtually all government programs delivered in the north is the lack of any significant marketing effort on the part of the responsible agencies. This stems, to some degree, from a reluctance to "direct" or "target" the programs to particular areas or groups. Northern communities, particularly those in remote areas, are less aware of available programs and generally less capable of preparing satisfactory proposals. In addition, liaison with agencies is often difficult because of an absence of delivery personnel in those areas. Required measures include:

- Improved dissemination of program information
- Greater personal contact at the community level by program delivery representatives
- The proactive targeting of specific programs to individuals and groups that might benefit the most from these initiatives
- Provision of outreach assistance in support of the program application process
- Efforts to consolidate applications for complementary programs
- Improved coordination among related delivery agencies

Management Assistance

More intensive hands-on management assistance is required by businesses in the north. Considerable opportunity exists for improved coordination and possible integration of the various programs that are available. More program targeting to the remote north is required.

Devolution of Services and Local Authority

The increased devolution of services to the remote communities would encourage the development of local government and support the economic development process. The federal government is undertaking initiatives aimed at increased Indian self-government. Given the mixed demographic structure of many communities in the remote north, it is important that the provincial government develop local government policies which are compatible with the federal plans.

Native Development Issues

Native development programming crosses a number of jurisdictional boundaries, both inter-governmentally (federal-provincial) and within the provincial government. There is an increasing need for the two levels of government to liaise in the area of program policy and planning. With regard to areas of provincial government responsibility, coordination problems exist among the N.A.D.C., the Native Secretariat and Alberta Municipal Affairs, the latter with regard to Improvement Districts operations. It is important that adequate coordination exists between the federal-provincial Executive Committee, which functions under the Memorandum of Understanding on Native Issues and the Program Advisory Committee, which provides advice to the Management Committee of the Northern Development Agreement. The northern native responsibilities of the two groups overlap.

Other Issues

- Inflexibility of program criteria in terms of meeting northern needs
- Lack of regional and community economic planning assistance
- Lack of seed capital in remote communities
- Inadequacies in business planning and development assistance in the remote areas
- Need to enhance access by northern businesses to private and public sector contractual opportunities
- Confusing multiplicity of job creation and training programs offered by the two levels of government
- Need to devise more training initiatives which combine on-the-job experience with classroom training
- Requirement to re-orient training and educational programs to the needs of the regional marketplace

Conclusions

The study program represents an initial attempt to identify and assess some of the program delivery issues which influence economic development in the north. A more intensive analysis of some of these issues may be required to further document and corroborate the findings.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

The Closure of Canadian Forces Station Beaverlodge Community Impact Study

Written by: Fresh Start Social Consultants Co. Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta
and
Praxis '84
Calgary, Alberta

March, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council
and
Employment and Immigration Canada

Background and Purpose

This report was initiated by a brief presented to the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) at a public meeting at Hythe in January, 1985. The Economic Development Committee of the Town of Beaverlodge expressed a concern over the closure of the Canadian Forces Station (CFS) Beaverlodge and the impacts that this action would have on the community socio-economically. They were also interested in investigating possible alternative future uses of the CFS facilities.

Canadian Forces Station Beaverlodge is a long range radar base located 12 miles east of Beaverlodge and occupies about 218 acres of basically treed land on Saskatoon Mountain. The Community of Beaverlodge has a population of about 2000 people and is an agricultural supply centre.

CFS Beaverlodge has an operational role in support of North American Air Defence Command and is also charged by Air Command Headquarters, Winnipeg, to provide aid to the civil powers when requested. The Station was opened in 1953 by the U.S.A.F. and in 1963 the R.C.A.F. assumed control.

CFS Beaverlodge employs about 50 civilian personnel and up to 110 military personnel. Military salaries are $2.8 million and civilian salaries are $1.0 million (1984/85). The operations and maintenance budget is $1.5 million. It has been estimated by the Department of National Defence (DND) that an average annual expenditure of $3.1 to $3.75 million is spent in the surrounding communities within a fifty mile radius.

It has been announced by the Department of National Defence that the Department will no longer operate the Station after August, 1988. The Station will begin to shutdown as of April, 1988 with a loss of employment, equipment, and facilities.

The Northern Alberta Development Council, in cooperation with Employment and Immigration Canada, contributed financially to the project. The work was guided by the four-member Economic Adjustment Committee of the Town of Beaverlodge. The committee reported to the Town Council and to a larger Regional Steering Committee.

Objectives

The study was divided into two phases, according to two broad objectives.

1. To identify the impact of the closure of CFS Beaverlodge on the Town of Beaverlodge and surrounding area.

2. To assess the feasibility of new employment opportunities for base personnel and possible alternative uses for CFS Beaverlodge facilities.

Methodology

The study team divided its work into a number of components and collected its information in several ways.

First, one member worked with CFS files and records to determine expenditure patterns for the Station's spending in 1985. This required assessing all individual billings and then summarizing the information. This researcher also compiled information on all physical characteristics of the Station's facilities - some 70 structures. All facilities were personally visited. Much of the information was provided by the Station and reorganized for this study. This researcher also prepared and analyzed a questionnaire on the station which was distributed to all military personnel. All replies were returned in sealed envelopes to the Station Commander's office.

Second, one member interviewed each civilian employee at the Station. Each employee was sent a questionnaire which was returned at the interview. These were confidential interviews. The civilian union was presented with the summary of the questionnaire and interview information before it was released to other groups.

Third, two members interviewed a sample of Beaverlodge business and professional people. The researchers also talked with various community-active people in Beaverlodge and in other area communities and conducted two community workshops. Of the two workshops, one included formal presentations regarding proposed alternative uses and at the second, area residents came to discuss their ideas and raise questions.

All team members participated in presenting an interim report to four organizations including the Economic Adjustment Committee, the Military Commander, the Civilian Employees Union Executive and the Regional Steering Committee.

Principal Findings

CFS Beaverlodge Inventory

Population

There is a total of 105 military personnel, 49 civilian personnel and 8 Commissionaires employed at CFS Beaverlodge. Military and civilian personnel, along with their spouses and families, total 250 - 275 people.

Expenditure Patterns

CFS Beaverlodge spends $1.5 million per year across Canada as follows:

Grande Prairie	57%
Edmonton	18%
Beaverlodge	15%
Region	2%
Other Alberta	1%
Other Canada	7%
TOTAL	100%

The total military and civilian personnel have an annual disposable income of approximately $1.0 million, 40% of which is expended in Beaverlodge and surrounding area and 60% in Grande Prairie.

Station operations and military and civilian personnel expenditures within the region total approximately $2.0 to $2.5 million, 30% expended in Beaverlodge and 70% expended in Grande Prairie.

This regional expenditure of $2.0 to $2.5 million is less than the total of $3.1 million to $3.75 million expended by the base and personnel. The difference is sent or spent outside the region, or saved or used in other ways not affecting the region.

Use of Community Services

Both the civilian and military personnel use Beaverlodge for services, specifically health care, food, gas, retail purchases, restaurants and recreational uses.

Both the civilian and military personnel use Grande Prairie services, specifically for food, gas and retail stores. Most major purchases are made in Grande Prairie.

CFS Beaverlodge Facilities

The majority of the base facilities are more than 30 years old. They are in good structural, mechanical and electrical condition. The base facilities will have only essential maintenance completed between now and closure. The facilities are now in "the best shape they have been in years" due to an extensive upgrading program accomplished prior to budgeting reductions.

Effects of Closure

The Civilian Workforce

One-third of the civilian employees have lived in the area for 10 - 20 years.

One-third of the civilians live in Grande Prairie and one-half in Beaverlodge.

As the base closure moves closer, more jobs will be filled by civilian workers on contract.

Eighty-four percent of the civilian employees want to remain in the region if jobs are available.

Of those civilian employees eligible for transfer with the military, 80 percent want to stay and work if there is employment available on the site or in the area.

If no work is available on site or in the area, 90 percent of the civilian employees will take their transfer or move to find other employment.

The Community

Diverse opinions exist as to the economic effects on Beaverlodge due to the closure. The opinions range from seriously affecting the community to no effect at all. Most respondents felt there would be serious effects on a few businesses and some moderate effects on community life.

Respondents indicated that Grande Prairie would see the greatest economic effects because of the extent of CFS businesses and military and civilian expenditures in the community. Little effect on the community itself would be felt.

Few economic or social effects were expected in the surrounding region and communities such as Wembley, Hythe and Sexsmith.

Beaverlodge Services

Education - Sixty children of military and civilian personnel are in schools in Beaverloge and Hythe. Many of them will leave. This translates into a loss of funds to the school district and the particular schools. This could lead to a loss of a staff position (or partial position). No effect is expected in Wembley and because only a few students are in Grande Prairie schools, the effect will be minimal.

Medical/Health/Dental - The hospital will see little effect as most of the services are to older people in the region. There could be a loss of up to 20% in the medical and dental clinics. Staff reductions may occur.

Recreation - Little effect is expected on recreation use since most base personnel use the base facilities and program except for swimming, curling and golf.

Housing - There is concern over the future of DND's 36 trailer, mobile home park in Beaverlodge. There will be very little effect on the rental or ownership housing market in the communities.

Business - Food stores, other retail businesses and the service stations in Beaverlodge will see a reduction in their sales. The Sears mail order outlet will be affected as this facility is extensively used by military personnel and their families.

Suggestions for Future Use of CFS Beaverlodge

Suggestions have come from the military and civilian personnel, residents and business people in Beaverlodge, and key governmental people in Grande Prairie. The suggestions include returning the base to its natural state or developing the site for a variety of uses:

- A provincial or federal park
- A juvenile detention centre or other minimal security type of institution
- A summer camp or retreat (scouts, reserves)
- A summer and winter recreation centre
- A multi-use facility including fine arts, education, training and community use
- A research centre for forestry, wildlife or agriculture
- A provincial training centre for impaired drivers
- A resort with waterslides, hiking trails, X-country skiing, etc.
- A game preserve and tourist attraction

- An observatory or telecommunication centre
- A convention facility or "high tech" centre
- A rehabilitation centre (Workers' Compensation)
- A gambling casino
- An extension campus for Grande Prairie Community College
- A weather, solar energy research station or civilian radar facility

General Principles for Future Uses - Beaverlodge Residents' Views

- Accessible to local/regional residents
- No more land than currently used should be developed or cleared
- Multiple use for the site
- If no other use possible, return to its original state and maintain as a wildlife preserve/recreational area

Conclusions

Many opportunities for the future use of the CFS Beaverlodge exist. It is imperative that the Committee or another group act quickly to pursue these opportunities. However, the Committee must recognize that the costs to upgrade the facilities for a new user will be very high. Therefore, in terms of government and industry restraint, it may present difficulties for any large-scale use of the site.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Alternative Approaches to Social Impact Assessment

Written by: The DPA Group Inc.
Calgary, Alberta

April, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is an approach to planning and regulating new resource developments by objectively identifying the positive and negative social impacts associated with resource projects.

Dissatisfaction with established SIA approaches has grown. Some of the more major concerns are listed below:

1. Many people involved in the SIA process - government, industry, and community members - have been unhappy with the end results of the SIA as considerable time and cost go into the project, only to have the report end up on a library shelf once the project receives approval.

2. SIAs often contain voluminous amounts of data with little analysis.

3. SIAs discuss issues that are of little concern to the affected community.

4. The SIA process does not often resolve contentious issues between the community and the industry proponent.

This report is to suggest ways in which SIAs might serve a more useful purpose by discussing alternative approaches. The intent is to present the strategies and processes that underline the alternative approaches rather than provide a cookbook of detailed methods. Although the SIA has been used to investigate a wide range of social issues, this report is concerned primarily with the application of the SIA to resource development projects.

Methodology

To prepare this overview of alternative approaches for SIAs, ideas have been drawn from an extensive review of recent literature published from 1981 to 1985. This was supplemented by interviews with some active participants in the SIA field and with the authors' own experiences.

Principal Findings

Social Impact Assessments (SIAs) are undertaken for a variety of purposes depending on what the SIA is to accomplish. There emerged three main purposes.

1. A Decision - Making Tool / Approach
   To present an objective account of the social impacts of a project, similar to a cost/benefit analysis

2. A Community Development Tool / Approach
   To ensure that the affected community is able to have a direct voice in how and when resources proposed for their area are to be developed

3. A Management Tool / Approach
   Setting up mechanisms to monitor significant impacts and implementing strategies to act on the impacts
   This can also include monitoring the commitments of a resource company made to mitigate community impact

A fourth purpose is where the SIA is a part of the regulatory process and is described as a composite of the above three points.

Once the purpose has been decided on, it is possible to describe ways of better achieving the same purpose through alternative strategies. For each of the three main approaches to impact assessment, alternative strategies are presented.

Decision-Making Approach

Values Profiling

This approach incorporates the community values and beliefs into a profile according to such aspects as ethnic composition, population trends, the economic base of the community, skill and education levels of residents, and past history of adjustment to previous projects. By comparing the basic project description to some of the characteristics of the would-be affected community, an initial understanding is obtained of what issues are likely to emerge and what tools will be most useful to investigate and manage them.

Where some SIAs attempt to identify values through informal interviews, this method uses a formal methodology and allows the results of the values profile to be displayed in either graphical or pictorial fashion for review by the general audience. Consequently, the results obtained through formal values profiling are not subject to the same degree of personal bias as is the former method.

Trade-off Games

This game-like situation is where the "players" (community residents) become involved in the design process by "paying" for various combinations of services out of a limited fund of "dollars". This requires the "player" to make trade-offs among competing preferences. Subsequent rounds may be undertaken by the player to modify his original allocation or to respond to a new set of constraints imposed by the interviewer.

Trade-off games offer several advantages over the traditional survey or questionnaire. Players benefit by self-learning and by having to explicitly consider trade-offs whose implications and issues may not have been considered or were difficult to express. Planners and SIA researchers determine a community's preferences when confronted with a situation of having to decide among conflicting or incompatible goals, or having to allocate scarce resources among competing demands. The planners thus involve citizens in defining what they consider to be important, rather than have planners assume citizens' values.

Community Development Approach

Where there is a high degree of conflict between the industry proponent and the community, the community development approach can be used. This approach uses the technique of environmental mediation where mediation emphasizes direct dialogue between the conflicting interest groups. The purpose is to reach an agreement that benefits both parties and avoids a situation where one party wins and one party loses, as in court.

Environmental Mediation is simply defined as:

> "An ad-hoc policy-making process in which representatives from environmental groups and business groups sit down together with government officials and a neutral mediator to negotiate a set of binding policies to resolve a particular environmental dispute." (Amy, 1983)

While not having any powers of arbitration, the mediator acts to diffuse hostility, sort out miscommunications, and package the demands of the different parties into a settlement that is voluntarily agreed to by all parties.

There are three main advantages of environmental mediation:

1. It allows for direct dialogue between interest groups and promotes meaningful participation of the interest groups in the decision-making process.

2. It can be more efficient than alternative conflict - resolu ion processes.

3. It can produce a solution that is more satisfactory and more lasting.

Management of Impacts

The basis for a management approach is to respond to impacts that cannot be fully anticipated as they emerge. Briefly, the management function entails two distinct tasks:

1. The monitoring of the socio-economic environment to detect trends and emerging issues soon enough to take action

2. The implementation of an action plan to respond to the identified impact

Although simple in concept, the management approach is limited by difficulties in knowing what trends to monitor, how to interpret the trends, and to whom responsibility should be assigned to mitigate impacts. As well, effective management often requires a coordinated response from key private and public organizations.

Two attempts that have been made in Canada to improve impact management include the use of Community Development Agreements and Canada Benefits.

In a Community Development Agreement, a contract is signed between the

proponent and the community (municipal government) wherein each party undertakes specific obligations during the period when impacts will be generated by the proposed project. Obligations can require the proponent to forward funds to pay for specified additions to the infrastructure, and can require the municipality to commit to timely planning and building approvals for the project. Ontario Hydro has a well-documented set of CDAs.

The use of Canada Benefits, established by the federal government "to ensure full and fair access for Canadians to the industrial, social and economic opportunities from petroleum activities on Canada Lands" (i.e. lands north of 60 degrees latitude) commenced with the formation of Canada Oil and Gas Lands Administration (COGLA). Special measures are encouraged to enhance the participation of disadvantaged individuals. COGLA requires that a company submit a benefits plan prior to commencing activity, and prepare an annual report, subject to public scrutiny, which outlines its achievements for the year. A typical action plan, as represented by Dome's 1984 plan for the Beaufort Sea activities, included detailed intentions with regard to:

- Northern employment
- Northern training
- Northern business development
- Northern cultural and social programs
- Social and environmental monitoring

Although confined primarily to economic development issues, this approach is credited as being a significant factor in increasing benefits to northern residents.

Conclusions

Many consider the SIA an emerging discipline which is still subject to problems that will be worked out as better approaches are evolved. The

conventional approaches need to be improved to increase the relevance and usefulness of SIAs to the local communities affected by resource projects.

Each of the approaches discussed - decision-making, community development, and management - have inherent strengths and weaknesses, and none are suitable in all circumstances. Thus, before an SIA is undertaken, there should be a "scoping" process which entails a quick comparison between the proposed project and the community. This can determine an initial understanding regarding the issues that are likely to emerge and, as well, the planning tools most useful to investigate and manage them.

The alternative strategies presented demonstrate that a variety of ways exist in which affected communities can participate more effectively in the SIA process. However, the strategies can also require additional commitments of time and money from the community and the project proponents. This could prove a major obstacle in the adoption of alternative ways of conducting SIAs. Two emerging trends, however, may allow this obstacle to be overcome. Firstly, increasing favor is being given towards undertaking issue-focused SIAs rather than the comprehensive, technically-oriented approach of the past. This can free human resources from conducting focused work. Secondly, an increased level of community assertiveness could arise in their desire to benefit from the project. The proponent may be required to develop a closer working relationship and be able to demonstrate that local benefits are occurring and negative impacts are being minimized. Also, the growing competition for limited natural resources will result in tougher negotiations in the future. These emerging trends will require the introduction of alternative approaches to conducting SIAs.

Often, the nature and basic dimensions of the proposed project and the unique characteristics of the affected community will indicate how detailed an SIA should be.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Meeting with Trappers in Fort McKay

Written by: Northern Development Branch
Peace River, Alberta

May, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

As a result of the multiple use concept on Crown Lands, Alberta trappers have experienced problems from the impact of industrial activity. Over the years, the Northern Alberta Development Council has received a number of briefs on the problems trappers experienced. In response to a formal brief received from the Fort McKay Band, the Northern Alberta Development Council undertook to coordinate a meeting of the trappers, representatives of industry and government, as well as local community leaders.

Objectives and Methodology

The objective of this meeting was to have the various parties engage in a discussion of the problems which affect trappers as a result of industrial activity in their trapping areas, and to attempt to formulate solutions to those problems.

In preparation, the Northern Development Branch searched the 1500 briefs in its files, reviewed much sociological, legal, and technical material, and conducted a wide range of interviews with community, industry and government people. A background paper was prepared and circulated. As well, a short overview of trapping related issues formed the prelude to the meeting.

Principal Findings

The Fort McKay Trappers' meeting took place on May 21, 1986. The five hour meeting, led by a consultant from the Northern Alberta Development Council, provoked lively discussions in both English and Cree and yielded many positive suggestions for dealing with the problems.

The major point emerging from the discussions was that trapping issues are inter-related rather than separate from one another. As well, there appears to be a complex web of government personnel and policies which affect trapping. Often one government department does not know or understand another's machinery and policies. Compounding all of this is industry, which frequently acts independently of government and sometimes is inconsistent in its compensation policies.

The secretary for the Trappers' Compensation Board then made a presentation in which he outlined the Board's mandate and operational system. He fielded questions on the Board and compensation throughout the meeting.

A formal community brief on behalf of the 28 area trappers was also presented, outlining proposals to improve compensation policies.

In addition to the formal community brief, several members of the community expressed concerns about problems on traplines. Fish and Wildlife personnel addressed these concerns verbally, recommending courses of action and explaining procedures for processing of claims.

During this portion of the discussion, attention was drawn to the reliance of the corporate culture on "paper" documentation as opposed to the oral emphasis of the native culture. Such polarization in attitude can lead to problems in claim settlements.

Problems with the length of time and method used for notification of pending activity were also discussed. Recommendations included the extension of the present five day rule, along with involvement of a community liaison "contact" person.

The importance of a local person to act as liaison between the trapper, industry and the Fish and Wildlife department was frequently emphasized. The general feeling was that such a person could be useful in assisting trappers in their contact with Fish and Wildlife and in the processing of information to trappers from both industry and Fish and Wildlife.

The secretary to the Trappers' Compensation Board explained calculation of compensation as being based on the sustainable yield of a trapline. The Board's levels of compensation tend to be far lower than industry so that the Board is frequently regarded as a "last resort". Companies can use these lower levels as a threat during the negotiation process, adopting a "take it or go to the Board" attitude about a settlement proposal. To encourage private settlements, it was suggested that the Board:

1) Make settlments more in line with industry's awards
2) Penalize companies which do not try to make a settlement
3) Collect and maintain records of private settlements

Other issues canvassed included old files not yet processed and trapping as a lifestyle.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following suggestions emerged:

1. More Trapping Resource Officers should be hired to expedite investigation of claims.

2. A trapping liaison person in the community is needed to work directly with Fish and Wildlife and the industry.

3. The Trappers' Compensation Board proposes to hold a workshop concerning its operation.

4. Advance notice of activity should be extended from five to at least ten days.

5. Settlement time should be speeded up both at the corporate and the Compensation Board Levels.

6. Criteria of Settlement should be flexible enough to allow for the different types of oil activities.

7. Industry should confidentially advise the Board of settlements awarded so this could be reflected in future calculations.

8. A working committee should be struck specifically to address and implement recommendations arising from the meeting.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Telecommunications in Northern Alberta -
A Discussion Paper

Written by: W.J. Page and Associates Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta

May, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

Telecommunications in Northern Alberta emerged as a topic worthy of review by the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) over the past few years, largely based on the receipt of several briefs by citizen groups. This study was undertaken to address some of the questions raised by the briefs and to take a broader look at telecommunications needs and directions over the next decade.

Objectives

The study had the following four objectives:

1. Identify, scope and describe the key telecommunications issues in northern Alberta

2. Present options for development, considering northerners' objectives, technology, policies and regulations

3. Investigate innovative programs in Alberta and other jurisdictions

4. Examine how technology may aid in the next decade of telecommunication in northern Alberta

Methodology

Examination of the need for telecommunications in northern Alberta required careful consideration of a number of elements:

- Varied interest groups
- Wide geographic distribution of population
- Variety of business interests

To fulfill this data collection need, W.J. Page & Associates Ltd. undertook a careful and full analysis of the elements that must be considered to present a fair representation of the northern needs. The results of these efforts were greatly aided by the input of the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC), and a Consultation Group of interested persons.

A very representative input profile was achieved, as described below.

- 225 mail-out questionnaires distributed
- 112 responses
- 30 telephone interviews (to supplement questionnaire data)
- 20 personal interviews
- Visits with 10 regulatory officials
- Rural and urban community visits
- Telephone discussions with other jurisdictions such as State of Alaska; TV Ontario; and Centre for Telecommunications, University of Texas

Principal Findings

The priority held by the survey participants for each of the telecommunications services reviewed varied quite extensively. Ranked in the table below is the priority of each service against the other. The marking was derived by weighting the responses for Question #1-3a of the questionnaire, which asked the participants to rank the services from one to six in terms of need for improvement. The ranking is done on an index of ten (10). The greatest response (e.g. television) becomes the figure against which all others are compared. Therefore, radio's index is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{RADIO RESPONSE RATE}}{\text{TELEVISION RESPONSE RATE}} \times 10 = \text{INDEX}$$

Ranking of Priority for Services

	% With Service	Priority for Improvement (Maximum 100)	Index of 10
Television (% with TV's)	94	100	10.0
Radio (% with Radios)	94	81	8.1
Telephone (Residence)	98	70	7.0
Distance Education	17	51	5.1
Mobile Telephone	81	37	3.7
Telex	55	13	1.3

Television

Television is the single largest concern among the survey participants. There is a consistent desire and need for improved television coverage. Several specific improvements were suggested.

Regarding Entertainment:

- Increase Canadian content
- Decrease Canadian content
- Increase children/family viewing (PBS type)
- More movies and mini-series

Regarding Information:

- Increase Canadian news coverage
- Increase PBS access, more documentaries
- More local and northern news

Regarding Education:

- Increase education for children
- Increase education programs (general) for adults

Radio

Radio is the second most requested need in northern Alberta. Key improvements were expressed as follows:

- Increase FM coverage
- Increase AM coverage through more selection
- Improve range and reception of Edmonton radio stations
- Increase access to local (Canadian) news

Telephone

Telephone services are in great demand and are widely used. Some areas requiring improvement are:

- Lower Long Distance calling charges
- Greater coverage by Extended Flat Rate Calling (EFRC)
- Improved 911 service
- Increased access to individual line service (I.L.S.)

Distance Education

There is a lack of precision in the current definition of what Distance Education refers to and the awareness of who is delivering it and for what purpose. Although the survey did not identify it, it is suggested that there is an underlying need for Distance Education.

Specific suggestions for improvements came largely from the "educator" portion of the survey, as others were largely uninformed of what distance education was, and how it might benefit them. Suggestions include the following:

- Improve access to data bases and on-line reference materials
- Access to advanced university courses
- Improved ability to utilize computers
- Availability of ACCESS NETWORK in the home
- Educational programs on TV

Mobile Telephone/Telex

The services of both mobile telephone and telex appear to be satisfactory to the overall needs of the north. There were few improvements suggested.

Summary of Priorities

In terms of the demand profile, the priorities for development can be summarized as follows:

Most important need:	Television	- more channels more locations
Next most important:	Radio	- FM coverage - AM coverage
	Telephone	- lower long distance cost - larger EFRC - individual line service (I.L.S.)
Adequate now:	Mobile Telephones, Telex	
Uncertain demand:	Distance Education - better access	

Conclusions and Recommendations

Two main conclusions were drawn from the report.

1. Telecommunication in northern Alberta is important to those who live and work there.

2. Telecommunications technology is available to meet most demands but regulations and economics must be accommodated.

In order to address the needs of telecommunications in northern Alberta, the following recommendations can be made:

1. A Standing Committee be formed to co-ordinate the ongoing fulfillment of the identified needs in existing service areas.

   The Standing Committee could develop an action program for the next three to five years. The four major elements should include television and radio, telephone, distance education, and a "Telecommunications Services Incubator Pilot Project" (i.e., delivering improved business effectiveness through telecommunications). Each element should be defined in terms of results expected, the scope to be undertaken and the action steps to be applied.

   Formal review points should be defined to ensure expected results are being met.

2. NADC should work with the various groups involved with distance education to formulate a program to identify specific northern needs, and then to coordinate efforts as a group to develop the required delivery mechanisms.

This report indicates quite clearly that the identified demands for telecommunications services in northern Alberta can be largely fulfilled with existing technology. The limiting factors appear to be economics and regulatory considerations. Consequently, the options for future development are distinguished by their respective characteristics of regulatory and policy intervention and subsequently, the degree of economic intervention.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

A New Beginning - A Review of the Needs of
Seniors in the North Peace Region

Written by: Regional Interdisciplinary Steering Committee
For Geriatric Services in the North Peace River Region
Peace River, Alberta

June, 1986

Sponsored by: Peace River Health Unit
Senior Citizens Bureau
Manning Hospital Board
Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

Increasing concern about the "aging" phenomenon of the Peace River area's populace was the push behind this assessment study. Various agencies and organizations had noted a wide range of socio-economic requirements - ranging from the need for senior citizen housing and long-term care to the problems seniors face in maintaining social and family contacts to the necessity to plan for old age.

A coordinated interdisciplinary approach to find solutions was clearly indicated. Therefore, a committee was formed in April, 1984, to plan a research program around a needs assessment of the area. The Steering Committee for Geriatric Needs was familiarly known as the "Geriatric Committee".

A six phase program was established. This assessment deals with the first four of these phases. It analyzes the data gleaned from seniors and agencies, and discusses the findings.

The general purposes of the Steering Committee's efforts are listed below:

1. To seek to initiate a coordinated approach to the planning and delivery of services for seniors in the North Peace River region (Peace River Health Unit Area) based on the perceptions of seniors and those people providing services to them.

2. To search for innovative ways to better inform seniors of existing resources and to encourage better utilization of those resources.

Objectives

The Geriatric Committee established eight general research objectives:

1. To describe the senior citizen population
2. To describe their use of health care services
3. To report seniors' options regarding current services
4. To identify services required to keep seniors independent for as long as possible
5. To describe seniors' housing conditions and to identify their future requirements
6. To identify seniors' information
7. To describe an effective means of transmitting information to seniors
8. To describe and promote the development of a "services coordination" model - a what-to-do structure - which includes participation among planners and seniors.

Methodology

The Committee established a six phase research program. Phases V and VI are not dealt with in the report as they are viewed as implementation phases stemming from Phases I to IV.

Phase I - The Seniors Registry

From September to December, 1985, a registry of 3,000 people over the age of 60 was compiled.

Phase II - Research Design, Training and Agency Summary

All pertinent printed information was reviewed. Every agency within the area with services and programs for seniors was identified and its programs tallied.

Phase III - Survey of Seniors

Following the agency review, a questionnaire for seniors was carefully devised after much brainstorming, pre-testing and revision. Its purpose was a means of receiving and recording what seniors themselves believe to be the agencies' services, and the seniors' dependent and independent needs. With the help of consulting researchers, a survey was designed.

In response to a call for volunteers, 53 people took a training session and conducted the interviews. The Committee was impressed by the high calibre of volunteers and by the quality of their work.

Phase IV - Analysis and Report

A vast amount of data was collected. Organization and analysis were simplified through the use of a computer.

Principal Findings

Three documents were produced from this study:

Volume I - Executive Summary
Volume II - Technical Report
Volume III - Directory of Agencies

The principal findings are drawn from the Technical Report. The reader is encouraged to consult this report for detailed findings.

Analysis of Agency Interviews

Specifically, agencies were queried about program delivery problems, future programming plans and information needs. It was found that even though agency personnel usually have clear ideas about what ought to be in place and, in some cases, are working toward achieving these, many agencies do not have the autonomy to originate new programs since they are directed from head offices elsewhere.

Many gaps in programming were identified, some of which are identified below:

- Seniors tend to be spectators rather than participants.
- Often personnel are unaware of the programs and activities of their own agencies.
- Much information fails to reach native people.
- Although transportation services for the elderly are clearly necessary and important, no clearcut plans or priorities exist.
- No specialized mental health services for the elderly exist in the Peace region.
- Serious placement problems exist.
- Problems arise as a result of geographic vastness and sparse population.
- Preventive care is inadequate.
- Seniors "at-risk" should receive special monitoring.

Agency interviewees were able to provide a comprehensive list of needs which were classified into eight sub-groups:

1. Quality of life
2. Medical needs
3. Accommodations
4. Transportation
5. Financial
6. Outreach programming
7. General programming
8. Information

The reader is encouraged to consult the needs under each group.

Analysis of Seniors' Questionnaire

More than 400 seniors, many of them original pioneers of the Peace River area, were interviewed. Some had received their educations in other countries or in other areas of Canada and most had not gone beyond grade seven or eight. Many had far less education than that, with the average completed grade in the remote areas (isolated native communities) being grade two.

Also, some lack of understanding of the written word emerged. Not only is there a generally high illiteracy rate, but many had mother tongues that were other than English. All these things affect the way seniors wish to spend their twilight years. As well, they affect the information delivery system.

Many who are French-speaking, for example, stipulated that they would only leave their present communities if they could move to a community where French is spoken.

Native seniors do not consider moving from their home communities at all. If health reasons force seniors from their homes, most, regardless of where they live, would choose to stay as close as possible to their present homes.

About 75% of seniors now live in towns and villages, with the remainder in rural areas. Almost half live alone. In remote communities, more seniors live with families than in other regions.

Residents of the remote region have seldom made plans to relocate even if health fails, and, in other areas, only 17.7% have contingency plans in case of loss of health. About half of seniors claim good health, and although this varies from community to community, fewer in the remote region suffer poor health than in other areas.

Some foresaw that their families would care for them if need be, but many thought that would be unfair. Remote residents, who indicated they would not relocate even for health reasons, count on their families to look after them.

Although seniors are seen as poor, from 75.9% to 96.25% in developed areas feel they have adequate incomes while only 34.6% in remote areas believe the same.

Use of Services

Some services, like ambulances, are not available in remote areas, but Home Care received its highest usage there. Dental services and meals-on-wheels received highest usage where readily available. The remote areas are not, at present, well-served by these services.

Remote residents, in fact, used health care services (with the exception of hospitals) less often than other services. The most used were Community Health Blood Pressure Clinics, hospitals and eye specialists. A surprisingly low number take advantage of drop-in centres. Peace River had the highest usage recorded in the region (17%). Most remote communities do not have special senior centres, but even there only 20% use the community centres that do exist. Reasons vary for this, but many expressed the opinion that programs lack interest and variety. Transportation difficulties were also cited as a reason for non-use. However, those who do make use of the centres are satisfied with them.

Independence

Throughout the survey, seniors emphasized their desire to maintain independence. This was cited as reason for not wanting to leave their communities, for wanting better transportation, for avoiding institutionalization. Seniors generally are appreciative of programs geared to helping them maintain independence, although some proudly proclaim that they take care of things themselves, get their children to help, and have always looked after themselves.

Even so, most do wish help with things such as transportation, shopping, government forms, legal problems, home chores, and health concerns such as medication, toenails and home care. Most are willing to pay for these services, although some believe government is obliged to bear the cost.

Home Care received many bouquets. Adult day care was less well-known, although interest was expressed in learning more about it. Surveyors were not surprised at this finding since adult day care is relatively new.

Participation

Many seniors do not participate in activities and programs available to them. Reasons for this vary. Some are not in good enough health, some lack transportation and some no longer feel like getting involved. Quite a few declared themselves already so involved and busy that they have no time for programmed activities.

However, the pool of people that make up the senior population is largely untapped as far as volunteers are concerned and many expressed an interest in doing volunteer work. At the same time, few were keen on part-time jobs. Several would like to be involved in seniors' program planning.

Most preferred activity was visiting, a preference that is directly linked to their antipathy to sharing a room in a nursing home or lodge and is also related to their wish for independence.

Conclusions

Analysis of the responses led the committee to several conclusions:

- Women currently make up the majority of the 65+ population. It is likely they will always do so and this could affect programming. As well, since about half of the respondents remain married and in their own homes, programming to assist in caring for spouses may well be needed. Education regarding available options and special accommodation for couples in facilities may also be required.

- Support groups and other programs directed at the bereaved may be needed. Other losses connected with aging (loss of family, loss of friends, loss of status, loss of adequate income, loss of independence) may all require attention.

- The low literacy rate and lack of fluency in English may mean that information distributed by mail is not reaching its target audience.

- People have indicated they were unprepared for old age in many cases. Programs to explain the aging process may have to be targeted toward the pre-retirement population. At the same time, a realistic picture of old age must be presented.

- Placement due to health problems now often occurs during crises. Pre-education and planning could ease the transition and remove some negative connotations connected with institutionalization.

- If facilities were available in most communities and were integrated into those communities, it is likely that seniors would be more willing to be institutionalized.

- Visiting programs would be both popular and positive. Such programs could involve visiting friends and receiving visitors, "adopt-a-grandparent" programs, and a seniors' "buddy system". These programs could also double as monitoring systems.

- Seniors would like to be involved in planning services which affect them and would also like to lend themselves as volunteers.

- Some concern must be expressed regarding the over-reliance on physicians, some of whom do not have special geriatric training. The elderly must, at this time, receive the physician's approval before other health services can be accessed. This system tends to hinder independence and promote the view of the physician as the ultimate source of information and help.

- As the population ages even more, doctors will find that their patient load will become top-heavy with seniors from this age group. Doctors should be prepared for this and become informed about the various services available to seniors.

- Physicians, and other health care delivery systems (clinics for example) are excellent vehicles for information distribution and transmittal. Workshops for seniors could be attached to clinics as an extension service to help educate and inform.

- Seniors undergo stress when they are referred to specialists in cities. Not only does the strange clinic, hospital or professional frighten them but so does the journey and the urban setting itself.

- Basic services do not exist in most remote communities. As well, since seniors who live in these communities reject the idea of institutionalization, it is possible that some alternative solution must be discovered, perhaps one where the family's role is recognized.

- Since people wish to move into institutions only when they can no longer cope on the outside, it is clear that residents of such places are probably going to be older than anticipated, and in greater need of supervision.

- To assist seniors to remain independent and at home as long as possible, home adaptations such as griprails in bathtubs and reaching aids in kitchens may be necessary. It may be cheaper, as well, to subsidize domestic services than to provide institutionalization.

- Adult day-care is still another program that has implications for senior independence.

- Seniors know what kind of transportation services would help them and would like to be involved in planning in this regard.

- User-pay programs might need reviewing in light of the fact that 77% of respondents indicate a willingness to pay for domestic services.

- While there is no indication that seniors plan to leave the North in large numbers to seek warmer climates, there is a perceived shift of this population from rural to urban centres. This is evidently so they may be nearer medical and recreational facilities. Perhaps centralization of all types of facilities is the way of the future.

- Arthritis, blood pressure, memory (or loss of it), hearing and vision are all topics seniors would like to explore.

- Some misunderstanding exists about the differences in services offered and the specific nature of available programs and services.

- Seniors may regard Home Care as a program which helps them remain independent. The foundation of independence begins much earlier through preventive programs such as lifestyle and health education and specialty clinics.

Recommendations

There were 21 recommendations made in response to the report. The Geriatric Committee recommends that:

1. Local deliverers of programs for seniors meet a least once a year and share programming information on a formal basis and that informal ties and networking be established which would facilitate communication.

2. a) A new planning and coordination model be developed with the focus on information to seniors, coordination of services, and involvement of seniors.

   b) Seniors be highly involved in the evolution of this model and/or any programming for seniors should be composed of a majority of seniors.

3. a) Information be distributed for all services through health care outlets and that information be made readily available to these facilities.

   b) Material that is prepared for seniors must be prepared at appropriate levels of literacy and clarity.

4. The distrubution of information and the delivery of services be tied to the socialization patterns of seniors whenever possible.

5. The needs of seniors be reviewed every ten years and that local concerns be identified and addressed at those time periods.

6. Programming be flexible to meet local needs and that local input be considered in the planning.

7. New funding approaches be explored with extensive consultation of seniors.

8. Communities recognize that seniors have a positive role to play in all aspects of community life and that seniors should be sought out for their expertise.

9. Community groups be encouraged to consider seeking out and using seniors as volunteers.

10. While planning for transportation modes and systems for seniors, flexiblility, medical, social and recreational needs must be considered, and that seniors' input be sought in this regard.

11. The role and operation of senior citizen centres be redefined to meet the broader needs of the community and that they become focal points for programming and information dissemination.

12. The dedication and commitment of families be encouraged and enhanced through education of the population in regard to the aging process. Also, that service providers assist families in their supportive role through the provision of relief services when appropriate.

13. Health care providers consider using regional specialists when appropriate, and that a program be explored which would assist seniors in their travel and accommodation needs to access specialists.

14. The Alberta Government recognize, through policy and budget allotments, the changing housing needs and the role of lodges, nursing homes and auxiliary hospitals.

15. Alberta Hospitals and Medical Care consider the distance factor in their future construction projects.

16. There be greater awareness of the aging process from the physical, psychological and sociological perspectives. Also, that a holistic approach be taken by society.

17. Holistic pre-retirement education be available to individuals at earlier stages of life.

18. There be support of community domestic services, Home Care and Community Health Care Services to assist seniors in their efforts to remain independent.

19. The wishes and choices of seniors be respected and accepted by agency personnel and by family.

20. Seniors be given special assistance in completing documentation.

21. A special committee be established to address the needs of seniors in remote areas and specifically focus on programs to meet their needs.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Crop Insurance in Northern Alberta: Technical Report

Written by: Deloitte, Haskins & Sells Associates
Edmonton, Alberta

June, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

Alberta farmers have experienced major income problems due to poor and highly variable crop yields, in addition to unstable prices and markets for the major traded agricultural commodities. Production problems of farmers are highly related to weather variation. Northern Alberta, defined as the Northern Alberta Development Council area, is a vast region of the province with tremendous variations in soil, climate and topography, providing its producers with an ongoing challenge to manage viable farms.

To offset the uncertainty and reduce the risks of crop failure associated with unfavourable environmental conditions, many farmers subscribe to the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Program (AHCI). In the last few years the Northern Alberta Development Council has received numerous briefs on the present Hail and Crop Insurance Program in Alberta. Northern farmers have expressed concerns that the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Program should more accurately reflect their needs.

In early 1986 the provincial government announced a crop insurance review. With this opportunity to present the farmers' concerns, the Northern Alberta Development Council requested that a review of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Program, in relation to the northern farmers' needs, be completed. This study was prepared by Deloitte, Haskins & Sells Associates in June, 1986.

In September of 1986 a position paper was produced by the Northern Alberta Development Council and presented to the hearings of the Crop Insurance Review Panel. Based on the data and findings in the technical report, as well as extensive discussions, the position paper outlines specific recommendations for the AHCI to facilitate higher northern participation. Please refer to the position paper summary for further information.

Objectives

Based on the terms of reference and discussions with members of the study Steering Committee established to oversee the project, three primary objectives were identified:

- Review comparable existing programs in other areas of Canada and the U.S.A. and related crop insurance research
- Undertake a comprehensive survey of northern farmers, Alberta government officials and agriculture industry professionals to obtain insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the existing program and to provide recommendations for improvements
- Make a benefit/cost analysis of the current Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Program as it affects farmers in the NADC area

Methodology

The basic study approach was to gather data at two different levels. Five main sources of data were used for the study:

- In-person farm interviews
- Focus group meetings
- Agriculture industry/professional interviews
- Related secondary studies and reports
- Consultants' expertise

To design case study scenarios, both factual and perceptive information was gathered and generated with respect to crop insurancy payouts, premiums and economic data.

To supplement the primary information, data and information were provided by the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation, Statistics Canada, Alberta Agriculture and the Canadian, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and U.S. government agriculture and crop insurance departments.

All of the information obtained through personal interviews, focus group meetings and secondary data collection was reviewed and interpreted by the consulting team and the study committee, with primary focus on the three main objectives.

Principal Findings

Based on the analysis conducted, five main issues arose:

Crop Insurance Program Review

The program review showed that all provincial crop insurance plans (B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba) are quite similar. Differences arise in relative rates charged, efficiency of administration, price levels, and method of risk assessment.

From the review of documents, and based on limited interviews, it can be concluded that the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation offers a program with features very similar to those offered in other provinces. Any differences in level of producer satisfaction between provinces may be attributed to factors particular to the administration and procedures under each province's jurisdiction.

Producer Survey

A total of 157 farmers were surveyed in 14 locations throughout the NADC area. These producers represented a diverse range of farm sizes, experience levels and income. The majority of farmers surveyed purchase crop insurance, over 30% of them subscribing to individual coverage. In a sample of 46 producers surveyed, the loss payment ratio (between crop loss and crop insurance payment) in 1985 was estimated at 2.8 times the payment received. Over 63% of the producers believed the compensation received was not fair.

Most producers considered themselves moderately informed about the current program and options, although 60% of those surveyed thought crop insurance was not a good investment for their farms. The majority (98%) felt that southern Alberta is receiving more benefits than other parts of Alberta. Most producers (71%) would pay more for crop insurance if it would better meet their needs.

Based on questionnaire responses, the five ranked changes they would like to see are as follows:

- Base coverage on input costs
- Increase coverage levels
- Provide spot-loss coverage under the all-risk plan
- Further encourage individual coverage
- Provide more reward for good experience (through higher coverage and lower premiums)

Industry Interviews

Twenty-three industry professionals who are often approached by farmers for advice on crop insurance decisions were also interviewed. (These professionals were not AHCI employees.)

The three main program changes the professionals recommended included:

- Increase coverage levels to account for input costs
- Implement individual coverage for all producers
- Monitor program abuse more closely

Producer Focus-Group Findings

Fourteen focus-group meetings were held to gather the majority of information. Each producer completed a detailed questionnaire on his particular operation. The group was then asked to come to a consensus and rank the items they deemed most important for change. The following set of consolidated program changes was derived:

- Coverage should be based on input costs
- The good experience rating system should be revised
- Individual coverage should be expanded

In summary, producers in northern Alberta want a system in place that will assure their input costs. In general, they do not feel that the present program is satisfactory.

Economic Analysis of Case Scenarios

Several case scenarios were used to generate information on crop insurance costs and conditions for claim. Without attempting to address specific aspects of crop insurance claims, assessments, and payouts, an easy-to-understand approach was developed and yielded some interesting conclusions.

- Considerable cash loss is possible because crop insurance coverage often falls short of meeting production costs for northern farmers.

- If lower than illustrated yields were obtained, crop insurance would cushion against further losses.

- Operational risk increases with specialization.

- Insurance is more expensive relative to coverage in the Peace Region as compared to the balance of the province.

Conclusions

The Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation is encouraged to review this technical report and to recognize that the north has specific program needs. As the report indicates, the existing program has a number of deficiencies in meeting the needs of northern farmers. Revisions to the program should correct these deficiencies and facilitate greater northern participation in the program.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Crop Insurance in Northern Alberta: Position Paper

Written by: Northern Development Branch
Peace River, Alberta

September, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

In early 1986, the provincial government announced a crop insurance review. With this opportunity to present the farmers' concerns, the Northern Alberta Development Council requested that a review of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Program, in relation to the northern farmers' needs, be completed. A technical report was prepared by Deloitte Haskins & Sells Associates.

Based on the data and findings of the technical report, as well as extensive discussions, a position paper was developed by the Northern Alberta Development Council and presented to the hearings of the Crop Insurance Review Panel. Although the position paper contains a summary of the findings, please refer to the technical report for further information.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the technical report and extensive internal discussion, the Northern Alberta Development Council recommends the following:

- Individual coverage should be made more attractive for producers.

- Coverage should be based on input costs, allowing more flexibility for producers to insure to the level they wish, with producer and farm capabilities taken into consideration.

- The "good experience" rating system should be revised to provide more reward to those producers with a good record of performance. "Acts of God" in a single year should not eliminate several years of good experience at a rate faster than 25% per year.

- Spot-loss coverage should be allowed under the Crop Insurance Plan.

- The plowdown policy should be reviewed to allow plowdown if the crop is not economical to harvest between July 1 and August 1. This plowdown should result in a summerfallow classification.

- A payment for snowed-under crops should be made within the calendar year. Farmers should be allowed an advance on the balance of the snowed-under crop.

- A review of insurance rates should be conducted.

- A complete revision of program dates by crop should be considered, recognizing possible regional variations.

- If the All Risk program is to be continued in the North, the area should be divided into smaller regions, with recognition given to climatic variations and soil productivity.

- More information should be supplied to producers.

Conclusions

The Crop Insurance Review Panel is encouraged to review this position paper and technical report in detail and to recognize in particular that the North is unique. The existing Canada-Alberta Crop Insurance Program has several shortcomings for northern farmers and we would ask that any revisions to the program correct for these disadvantages in order to facilitate higher northern participation.

The Northern Alberta Development Council understands that it will take time to make the several needed revisions to the Canada-Alberta Crop Insurance Program. It is further understood that more research to test the workability of several options may be needed. However, the Council would urge the Provincial Government to proceed with implementation of changes without delay.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Survey of Services and Boundaries of Agencies in the Peace River Health Unit Area

Written by: Boundaries Committee for the
Rural Health Care Association of Alberta
High Prairie, Alberta

July, 1986

Sponsored by: Rural Health Care Association of Alberta
and
Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

The need for improvement of health care services by regionalization was mentioned many times at the first Rural Health Care Conference in November, 1981. In 1984, at the second conference, the working party on facilities reported specific problems associated with the lack of coterminous boundaries and the subsequent inefficiencies this produced.

Representatives of the Rural Health Care Association of Alberta (RHCAA) brought this problem to the attention of the Health Caucus of the legislature and the ministers for Hospitals and Medical Care (Dave Russell), Social Services and Community Health (Neil Webber) and Labour and Manpower (Les Young). The ministers and MLAs suggested that the Rural Health Care Association of Alberta come up with suggestions to improve the situation.

A working party was formed and decided it would be necessary to take a portion of rural Alberta and study it in depth. The RHCAA board agreed and the Peace River Health Unit area was selected as the pilot project area.

Ultimately, the aim was to improve all aspects of health care by increasing the efficiency and eliminating duplication of services caused by a lack of coterminous boundaries.

The Rural Health Care Association of Alberta approached and received approval from the Northern Alberta Development Council to cost-share in the project. The study was then initiated as a summer project for a post-secondary student.

Methodology

The research project began with the review of previous research and reports on health care in northern Alberta. A questionnaire was then designed and distributed to the following twelve health care agencies in the Peace River Health Unit area:

- Fairview General Hospital/Nursing Home
- High Prairie Hospital/Nursing Home
- Grimshaw/Berwyn and District Hospital
- Manning General Hospital
- McLennan Hospital
- Peace River Hospital/Nursing Home
- Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
- Mental Health Services
- Health and Welfare Canada
- Peace River Health Unit
- Metis Indian Town Alcohol Association (MITAA)
- Medigas Homecare Seniors

Principal Findings

Based on the survey results, the following points were established:

1. The main goal/objective of the agencies located in the area of study is to provide the best possible health care to people in the area.

2. Seventy-five percent of agencies surveyed felt they required additional personnel in order to maintain and enhance service to the public.

3. Eighty-three percent of agencies surveyed felt there was a demand for additional services in their area.

4. Fifty percent of the agencies surveyed felt there is a need for their agency to provide additional services.

5. Although each of the agencies surveyed had similar areas of service, none had boundary lines that were exactly the same.

6. Eighty-three percent of the agencies surveyed did not feel that duplication of services was a major problem as a result of overlapping boundaries.

7. One hundred percent of the agencies surveyed said that they served people outside of their jurisdictions for reasons such as client choice, client accessibility, and referrals.

8. Fifty percent of the agencies surveyed felt there were problems associated with a lack of coterminous boundaries such as service gaps, coordination problems, policy conflicts and workload increases.

9. Eighty percent of the respondents provided suggestions towards improving the delivery of health care in the Peace River region. These included specific suggestions regarding increased cooperation, enhanced communication, improved coordination, and restructured administration among health care agencies.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is apparent that the lack of coterminous boundaries does have an effect on the delivery of health services in the Peace River Health Unit area and many of the respondents had suggestions toward improving the delivery of health services. Some of the main solutions were as follows:

- Increased cooperation
- Enhanced communication
- Improved coordination
- Restructured administration

In dealing with the boundaries question, some specific suggestions were made:

- Flexible rules regarding boundaries and referrals
- Establishment of a regional coordinating body
- Rationalization of boundaries

Due to the fact that most of the specific comments for improvement were aimed at more cooperation, communication, and coordination among the health care agencies, it was recommended that an interagency committee consisting of representatives from hospitals, nursing homes, health units and mental health professionals be organized to meet regularly and share information on their respective agencies and programs. Further discussion on the boundaries issue could be dealt with by this group and specific solutions could be identified and put into action.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Alberta Development Branch
on

Report on Highway 55 N.E. Alberta

Written by: I.D. Systems Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta

December, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

During recent years, the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) has been the recipient of numerous briefs and presentations concerning Provincial Highway No. 55, particularly the section in northeastern Alberta between its junction with Highway 36 south of Lac La Biche and the beginning of pavement at Iron River. The briefs and presentations have been authored by a variety of interest groups, organizations and individuals, and share a common theme of advocating the extension of pavement on Highway 55 from Iron River west to Highway 36.

In response to these local individual representations, the NADC determined that a report should be prepared on the improving and paving of the highway. I.D. Systems Ltd. was commissioned to do the study. The purpose of this report is to look at the potential benefits of paving the road - benefits to the area, to the region, and to the province. The report is to include the resulting benefits to the economic sectors of tourism, economic development, agriculture and industry, etc., in the area adjacent to the road, and to the broader northeast area including Lac La Biche, Cold Lake and Bonnyville. The objective of this report is to canvass facts, comments, opinions and assessments from those parties involved with the highway from a variety of perspectives and to synthesize them into a concise, succinct and comprehensive report.

Principal Findings

- Considerable interest in having the highway paved has been expressed by a wide variety of interest groups.

- Potential tourism and recreation developments are viewed as the primary reasons for paving the highway.

- The highway has undergone fairly continuous improvement since the mid-1970s.

- Paving the remaining 78 kilometres would result in an increase in maintenance costs of 46% (1986 dollars).

- Capital cost to pave the 78 kilometres in 1986 dollars is estimated (order of magnitude) at $24.2 million.

- The volume of traffic on the paved portion is approximately 2.87 times greater than that on the gravel surface.

- Economic value to the area from agriculture, forestry, oil and gas, and recreation and tourism in 1985 dollars, on an annual basis, is $26.4 million.

- Potential increases in economic values in the tourism and recreation sectors alone are approximately $4 million in expenditures by 1990, and $1 million (minimum) in capital investments.

- The large urban population of Edmonton would utilize a major destination facility in the Lakeland area similar to Calgary and Kananaskis Country.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The report notes several conclusions and recommendations, some of which are listed below:

- The highway is, and is recognized as, an important northern east-west transportation link. Notwithstanding its importance, the travelling public will avoid using it if at all possible.

- There seems to be a perception that this part of the province lags far behind other areas of Alberta in terms of infrastructure development, especially in terms of paved highways and secondary roads, in spite of the gains/improvements made in the last ten years.

- There is considerable potential for the development of an oil and gas service sector in Lac La Biche. The potential would be enhanced by the paving of Highway 55 which would give these firms good year-round access to the oil and gas fields and the other oil towns of Bonnyville, Grand Centre, Cold Lake and Lloydminster.

- Selected economic factors indicate that the area's annual economic value ($26.4 million 1985) is slightly in excess of a lump sum cost to pave the highway ($24.2 million 1986).

- Potential benefits in the area include the development of the tourism/recreation sector, the development of the forestry industry, and the continued development of the oil industry.

- It is logical to conclude that, if the highway is paved, east-west access will be improved, more vehicles will use the highway, and the development of tourism and recreation facilities will be encouraged.

- As there is no reason for the highway not to be paved, and the potential benefits are many and substantial, efforts should be initiated to get the paving of the highway scheduled immediately.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

A Guide to Business Opportunities in the Oil and Gas Industry in Northern Alberta

Written by: Opportunity West Development Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta

December, 1986

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

This guide has been written to address ways and means for both northern businesses and resource companies to strike a more mutually and economically satisfying approach to partaking of energy sector opportunities.

The handbook is primarily directed toward three northern Alberta groups:

1. Established businesses in the oil and gas sector that wish to maintain or expand their operations

2. Individuals planning to start a new service or business which will cater to the oil and gas industry

3. Communities hoping to expand their oil and gas service and supply sectors

Objectives

Four basic objectives were identified:

1. To indicate some ways and means of recognizing and pursuing potential business opportunities

2. To provide some insight into contract bidding

3. To suggest methods by which communities can assist their local businesses to secure energy sector opportunities

4. To offer some tips for survival in northern Alberta's oil and gas industry

Principal Findings

The handbook includes five main sections.

Recognizing Business Opportunities in the Oil and Gas Industry

There are five steps in conducting business with oil and gas companies:

1. Assess your business
2. Do your homework on the industry
3. Do your field work
4. Follow-up to a decision
5. Deliver

In assessing your business you must first define your business and outline its goals and objectives. Then, as objectively as possible list the various strengths and weaknesses of the company, identifying possible solutions to each weakness.

Homework is a prerequisite to success. Sources of information include the ERCB, Nickle's "Daily Oil Bulletin" and "Rig Locator Bulletin", and the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors. Keep individual well and company intelligence files and maintain key contacts. When talking to oil personnel, ask about their drilling plans or lease expiry dates. The oil and gas industry is a word-of-mouth industry, so join local associations and maintain social contacts.

It is important to have a presence in the field. When you go to the jobsite, be prepared. Repeat visits until you get the necessary information. Keep the local job managers aware of what your business can offer and then be prepared to deliver it. Always attempt to build a reputation as a reliable business.

A successful business maintains a constant presence and continuously expands its territories. Remember that a sales call requires follow-up. Tenacity, hard work and aggressiveness often form the basis of a successful business.

Your business should never promise what you can't deliver. Deliver on time, or earlier, provide follow-up service and ask for feedback from clients.

The Business Plan

The boom and bust nature of the oil industry makes long-term planning difficult. However, the informed and prepared business stands the best chance of survival. Thus, short-term planning is recommended. The greatest similarity seen among owners and managers of businesses with difficulties is a general lack of planning. The Business Basics Checklist provides the key fundamentals of starting and operating a business:

1. Self/business evaluation
2. Marketing and market analysis
3. Business planning
4. Financing
5. Sources of assistance

Successful entrepreneurs exhibit a number of characteristics, including drive and energy, self-confidence, tenacity, problem-solving capability, willingness to take risks, and money-mindedness. They usually combine positive traits, constructive methods and skills, and management abilities with common sense. Long hours, hard work, risk-taking and responsibility dispel preconceived glamor. Clarify your reasons for being in business. Identify your product and scrutinize its viability.

Successful marketing involves knowing who your customers are and tailoring your product or service to satisfy their need. The starting point is for the marketer to convince the consumer that his product satisfies a need. Know the characteristics of your clientele and never underestimate your competition.

Market analysis is just as important as a marketing strategy. Keep track of anything that affects activity in the oil and gas industry:

- Review the best sources of information for your area
- Define the kind of activity occurring in your area
- Define the role your business can play in the resource activity
- Determine the influence of land leases, permits and government incentives in your area
- Project the domestic and international market prospects
- List all non-energy projects slated for your area and determine the possible roles of your business

Develop a detailed business plan, regardless of whether you are starting a business or are already in business. A business plan is a written summary of what you hope to accomplish and how you intend to utilize your resources. A good business plan should encourage realism; identify customers, your market area, your pricing strategy, and the competitive conditions under which you must operate; and improve your overall ability to manage your business. Prepare the plan yourself, but seek guidance if you need it. A good business plan should include:

- A description of the business
- Financial data
- Supporting documents

When your plan is complete, you are ready for action. In the oil patch, it is vital to stay on top of changing conditions and adjust your plan accordingly.

As an owner of a business, you are in it alone. However, joining the local chamber of commerce and interacting with other business neighbors and suppliers can help overcome this feeling. As well, your accountant, lawyer and banker all have a vested interest in your survival. Maintaining key relationships with them can help.

Preparing and Submitting Contract Bids

There are four steps in the bidding process:

1. Getting on a bidder's list
2. The invitation to bid
3. The bid
4. The debriefing

The first prerequisite to bidding is to have your business name entered on oil and gas company bidder's lists. The second necessity is to utilize your grapevine to its fullest potential. Tell the bid-letter what you and your business are capable of. Discuss with the decision-maker the strengths and weaknesses of your bid.

The Community Business Profile and Directory

It has been established that communities must help to make the interaction of local business with the oil patch easier. They can considerably enhance that process by adding one meaningful economic development tool: a community business profile and directory. The directory should be a comprehensive, informative and flexible plan. It is a selling document first and foremost. The local Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Committee would be ideal bodies to take leading roles in the project.

The profile directory should include:

- A brief community overview
- An alphabetical list of all licenced businesses in the community
- A directory of businesses by category
- Key community contacts

The business directory should be widely distributed and current.

Conclusions

There are several elements of management strategy which should be considered by any manager whose business depends on the oil and gas industry:

- Get the first contract
- Be conservative
- Know the strengths and weaknesses of your business
- Perform seasonal projections
- Diversify your clientele
- Use your network
- Get to know your banker
- Operate with sound business principles
- Learn from your mistakes
- Know your product or service
- Understand your customer
- Be punctual and reliable

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Downtown Revitalization in Northern Alberta

Written by: Northern Development Branch
Peace River, Alberta

January, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

During the past years, various communities and organizations in northern Alberta have become increasingly interested in improving and redeveloping their downtown core areas. Higher retail leakage, a difficulty attracting new businesses, and fluctuating economic conditions are some of the challenges currently facing northern communities. In their attempts to overcome these challenges, communities are asking what is available in terms of support, financial or otherwise, for implementing revitalization projects and plans. In an effort to obtain a thorough review of their ideas and concerns, several communities have approached the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) requesting assistance and support.

To become more familiar with the issues, the NADC requested that a detailed review of downtown revitalization be undertaken. This report is an attempt to broadly examine the issues and concerns encountered by northern communities and the assistance presently available to communities wanting to revitalize their downtowns.

Downtown revitalization is defined as:

> The improvement in the business vitality of an area through more aggressive and cooperative marketing and promotional programs, and improvements in sales and service. Physical improvements to meet the main objective of revitalizing the area are necessary.

The key ideas in this definition include economic improvements to enhance the business vitality of an area, along with physical improvements as required.

Objectives

A steering committee, consisting of 11 individuals from both private industry and government, was established and identified five objectives:

- To determine and describe what programs presently exist in Alberta for downtown revitalization and to identify any gaps which may surface
- To analyze and evaluate existing downtown revitalization programs in other provinces
- To determine community concerns and interests regarding downtown revitalization in northern communities
- To explore the economic results of revitalization in the community
- To make conclusions based on these findings

Methodology

The study approach utilized several sources of data:

- A literature review of publications and reports on downtown revitalization, including program administration guidelines and case studies
- Interviews with individuals, both government and non-government, who could provide background and insight into the topic area

- A survey involving 26 towns in northern Alberta with populations of 1,000 and over, in an effort to get input on issues and concerns surrounding downtown revitalization in their communities

- A field trip to four communities in British Columbia by the research team, as well as an in-depth interview with the program administrator of that province's Downtown Revitalization Program

Principal Findings

Following are some of the major findings which emerged during the course of the study:

1. Downtown revitalization requires a commitment to a comprehensive approach - involving organization, promotion, marketing and design - for success. Although physical improvements may occur within this process, revitalization cannot rely on beautification alone. A dynamic revitalization program requires both economic and physical components to be successful.

2. A number of success factors have been identified in the literature. Some emerge as critical to success and crucial in any revitalization endeavour:

   - The process of revitalization must be initiated and controlled by the businesses and the community themselves. Decisions and actions have to come from the local level if there is to be long-term commitment and cooperation.

   - A strong commitment is vital in fulfilling the goal of revitalization. Both public and private sectors must believe that with time, energy and money, downtown can be restored to its functional state.

- Cooperation among all of the key players is a critical factor in downtown revitalization. The businesspeople, town administrators, municipal council, local planners, and public must all be willing to overcome differences in working toward a common goal.

- Full-time management has been identified as very important to the success of a revitalization project. Coordinating, organizing, and communicating can more effectively be accomplished by someone whose time is dedicated to the project as opposed to volunteers with other commitments.

3. A generic trend in the process of revitalization can be identified and involves five phases: the initial phase (the spark, exploring issues and establishing support, public awareness and setting goals and objectives), establishing an organization, preparing a project outline, implementing the project and monitoring the project. The local process initiated, developed and operated by the community, enhances the success of the project.

4. Evidence from a survey of a cross-section of six revitalizing communities in B.C. points to an increase in economic development, business sales and tourism activity. The sales increases ranged from 27% reported in one community to a high of 84% in another. Other measured factors implied the program was very successful. Other revitalized Alberta communities are also seeing results. Old Strathcona in Edmonton has had 80 new businesses open in the last two years. In five years the Fringe Festival has increased visitor attendance from 7,500 to 119,000 and increased revenues from $30,000 to $200,000. In three years Red Deer has decreased its vacancy rate from 23% to less than 1%, added 62 businesses and 16 professional offices, created an estimated 225 jobs, and seen 20 business expansions. Approximately $6.5 million has been spent in Red Deer by the private sector on physical structure improvements, expansions and renovations.

5. In northern Alberta there appears to be an emerging interest in downtown revitalization and community development. Case studies of Grande Prairie, Peace River and Grimshaw give evidence of their activity and involvement; other northern communities are in the initial stages.

6. Downtown revitalization can be an effective program any time, but becomes particularly important in periods of economic slowdown. The dollars spent have a dramatic economic "spin-off" effect locally. This can show up in increased sales, materials and labor for facade development, materials and labor for capital improvements, business marketing and promotion activities, tourism, new building construction, etc. Also, the revitalization and increased stability of local businesses cannot be overlooked.

7. While communities can engage in downtown revitalization programs independently through their own merchants' associations and municipal councils, the evidence strongly suggests that more can be achieved if a provincial program is in place to assist interested groups both financially and technically. A provincial program does not necessarily have to be "expensive" in order to be successful. While it is true that two other provinces with successful programs have a "grant" component, the largest portion of the program is centred around the revolving-fund concept. Money borrowed by municipalities for downtown revitalization is paid back over a period of years. However, small grants can be an effective incentive for communities to develop initial concept planning, encourage individual business facade improvement to fit an overall community strategy, and undertake collective marketing strategies.

8. Present revitalization activities in Alberta primarily involve the Departments of Municipal Affairs and Economic Development and Trade and include such initiatives as BRZ legislation and the Self Help Action Kit. In terms of technical and advisory assistance there is some attempt at a coordinated approach between these two departments, although limited staffing resources have curtailed their involvement in the community. Resources designated to downtown revitalization concerns and community projects could provide the much-needed assistance, direction and support required by revitalizing communities. It appears there may be need for a more focused government response in actually designating an appropriate group to work exclusively in this area.

9. The lack of financial assistance for revitalization projects is apparent in the project outline and implementation phases. Financial assistance is required for components such as project outline development, project coordination, capital projects, and promotions and marketing. Although some grant programs are available through Alberta Transportation, Alberta Culture, and also the Northern Development Agreement, minor changes in their eligibility criteria could enhance their applicability to the revitalization process. Re-priorizing existing resources is not expensive and does not necessarily require an infusion of new money.

Conclusion

It is apparent that downtown revitalization is an important and timely topic for many of our northern communities. Because of the many and varied aspects of effective revitalization projects and programs, it is suggested that a workshop be held in northern Alberta in the near future. This workshop would involve merchants and municipal leaders from across northern Alberta, planning commissions, government representatives, and resource people from successful Canadian programs, and would provide the opportunity for further discussion and action planning.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

Ambulance Service in Northern Alberta

Written by: I.D. Systems Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta

June, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

Since 1973 the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) has received numerous briefs dealing with the health care system in general, and a number that specifically address the question of ambulance service. Many of these briefs suggest that ambulance service could be significantly improved.

Because of the widespread interest in Alberta surrounding ambulance service, the Minister's Policy Advisory Committee on Hospitals and Medical Care held hearings on the ambulance situation in June of 1987 at locations throughout Alberta. In order to present a northern perspective, the Council prepared this position paper.

Methodology

The research included telephone interviews with persons involved in various capacities in ambulance services, including hospital administrators, members of hospital boards, owners of private services and air charter companies, Department of Hospitals and Medical Care personnel, and employees of ambulance services. This was supplemented by a review of applicable legislation and regulations, guidelines prepared by the Alberta Ambulance Operators Association (AAOA), specifications for a dedicated air ambulance aircraft, briefs to the Council and other bodies, and related material.

Principal Findings

General

There are numerous ambulance operations in and adjacent to the NADC area. In addition, air ambulance services are available throughout the area.

These services are provided by a mixture of private, municipal and hospital-based ambulance systems. All ambulance services are controlled by the local municipality. A provincially-operated ambulance system is not supported. It is generally felt that such a service would be prohibitively expensive.

Legislative

Several people expressed their belief that the present legislative system which governs ambulance delivery systems would work more efficiently if a comprehensive Ambulance Act were enacted. A number of respondents also indicated that there are some ambulance services in northern Alberta which are not meeting minimum standards. As well, the ambulance staff in some areas are not provided with formally prepared and adopted health care protocols. This creates a potential for legal problems.

Funding and Insurance

Ground ambulance services are largely funded by user fees; air ambulance services are funded by the provincial government. Most ambulance services charge fees in accordance with guidelines published by the AAOA, Blue Cross or the provincial government department. There is no standard billing procedure, which causes some collection problems. Private insurance companies and uninsured motorists are especially difficult to deal with.

Staff Training

Staff with northern ambulances range from volunteers with basic first aid training to professional paramedics. Most ambulance operators require that their staff meet the minimum qualifications mandated by the AAOA and the Health Disciplines Act. However, it appears that some northern operators hire staff with no formal first aid training.

Due to the distance between communities and the low number of interested persons, it is often difficult to provide advanced training courses for ambulance staff. The computer-assisted course offered by SAIT helps in the distance problem, but it is still difficult to arrange the needed practical training.

Ambulance Dispatch

All ambulances are equipped with at least one type of voice communication system. Many have both a radio and a mobile telephone. Nonetheless, there are deficiencies in some radio systems. Some of these deficiencies, such as a lack of additional base station receivers, could be resolved quickly and inexpensively. Others, such as local geography, would be difficult or expensive to overcome. Occasionally communications problems are experienced when an ambulance transports a patient outside its usual service area, but standardized frequencies would remedy this. In general, ambulance response is less than five minutes.

Records and Statistics

There is no standardized recording form, but many of the northern operators use a Patient Care Report Form from the Edmonton Ambulance Authority. The statistics that are kept and the uses to which they are put vary widely. Due to this lack of a centralized record-keeping system, there is no way to determine what level of service is delivered in various parts of Alberta.

Recommendations and Conclusions

In view of the above findings, the Northern Alberta Development Council made a number of recommendations to the hearings, some of which are listed below:

- The provincial government enact a comprehensive Ambulance Act and until a new Act can be adopted, a guide to the operation of an ambulance system should be prepared and distributed.

- The delivery of ambulance services remain a local responsibility, subject to services meeting provincially-mandated minimum standards.

- The cost for inter-hospital transfers, both in-patient and out-patient, be borne by the hospital transferring the patient.

- A consistent minimum standard be required for all Class B ambulances.

- Local municipalities retain their present right to designate exclusive service areas for ambulance services and the right to require more than the minimum standards of equipment and training.

- The provincial government take immediate steps to ensure compliance with all regulations governing ambulance services.

- The provincial government develop programs to deliver training and upgrading courses for ambulance personnel throughout northern Alberta.

- All hospitals be equipped with sufficient base station units and ensure staff is available to operate them.

- The provincial government investigate methods for ensuring complete coverage of all areas of northern Alberta with a reliable radio communication network for use by all ambulances, using a designated ambulance frequency of 158.76.

- The provincial government adapt volunteer management programs for use by administrators to recruit and retain volunteers.

- The provincial government collect comprehensive statistics on use of ambulance services throughout the province.

After a review of current practices, the Northern Alberta Development Council concludes that the present ambulance system could be substantially improved in a number of ways. Most of the deficiencies identified are a result of the low population base and the long distances between fully-equipped hospitals in northern Alberta. Because of the small population base in most of northern Alberta, the economics of ambulance operators are marginal at best. It is necessary to ensure that a satisfactory service is available to all citizens in northern Alberta. The provincial government could assist in a variety of forms:

- Adjust billing procedures
- Standardize the way in which patients are treated after they reach a hospital
- Ensure any ambulance is of satisfactory quality
- Raise the minimum standards to operate an ambulance service and enforce these standards

Local control over ambulance systems in northern Alberta is strongly supported by Council. The need for volunteers will remain, although training could be improved. The Northern Alberta Development Council recognizes that it is not practical to expect ambulance response times in rural areas to approach those common in major urban areas. However, the Council firmly believes that all Albertans are entitled to quality health care from any ambulance called to assist them. The recommendations contained in this position paper are not costly and are intended to help achieve that goal.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

A Survey of Highly Qualified Manpower Needs in Northern Alberta

Written by: The Northern Development Branch
Peace River, Alberta

August, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

The 1987 Survey of Highly Qualified Manpower Needs in Northern Alberta is the follow-up to a study conducted in 1985 by Dr. Ann Harvey of Harvey Social Research Ltd. The 1985 study surveyed a large cross-section of northern-based employers. The follow-up study surveyed a sub-group of this cross-section. The purpose of the study was to determine the manpower needs of these employers for the next two years.

Methodology

Telephone interviews were conducted with all employers using a four-page questionnaire. The data obtained was analyzed in a number of ways. First, it was analyzed on the basis of three general occupational categories:

1) Science and Engineering
2) Social Sciences, Management and Education
3) Medicine and Health

Second, the data was analyzed according to vacancy projections based on two scenarios for each year. These were the "attrition" scenario and the "new economic growth" scenario.

Third, replies to general questions which concluded the interview were analyzed. These questions gave the interviewees an opportunity to comment generally on manpower needs and the Northern Alberta Development Council Bursary Program.

Principal Findings

The analysis of replies led to a number of findings:

Generally, four broad occupation categories emerged:

(1) "Very difficult to hire for", marked by high turnover and high vacancy rates

(2) "Difficult to hire for", marked by low turnover but long vacancies

(3) "Moderately difficult to hire for", marked by high turnover but short vacancies

(4) "Relatively easy to hire for", marked by low turnover and short vacancies

In addition to these broad occupation categories, it was also determined that there are three general community groups for northern Alberta. These are as follows:

(1) Small communities with stable populations within a two-hour drive of Edmonton

(2) Large regional towns and cities with stable populations anywhere in the North

(3) Small isolated communities, frequently having transient populations

It appears that both the type of occupation category and community location have an effect on employer recruitment strategies.

Science and Engineering

Employers in this category are usually involved in resource-based activities and indicated that recruitement of newly graduated personnel is generally not a problem. The mobile nature of employment with a resource-based enterprise creates the expectation of travel and relocation as part of the early career path. The distinction in this group was on the degree of experience of the personnel. The greater the experience required, the more difficult was recruitment. The distinction between occupational categories based on difficulty of recruiting was not strong in this group.

Scenario 1: Attrition

It was found that for the "attrition" scenario, projected vacancies for engineering graduates ran approximately 36 to 42 for both 1987 and 1988. This was the largest group of vacancies. There were two projected vacancies for 1987 and 1988 respectively for forestry graduates. Computer science graduates could expect three projected vacancies for 1987 and again in 1988. The demand for business administration positions was expected to be for two to three graduates in both 1987 and 1988. There was also a projected demand for two business/accountant graduates of NAIT/SAIT type programs for 1987 and 1988. Employers also predicted vacancies for four to five graduates of technical programs in 1987 and another two to three in 1988.

Scenario 2: New Economic Growth

Virtually all employers were unwilling to speculate on employment opportunities in a "new economic growth" scenario. Most believed their companies' situation would remain stable but did not foresee expansion in the near future.

General Questions

Most employers did not see the Northern Alberta Development Council Bursary Program as having an effect on recruitment policies due to several unique factors:

(1) Recruitment for highly skilled manpower occurs on-campus, often at a number of different universities throughout western Canada

(2) Hiring is done through head office

(3) The nature of resource-based activity and the organization of companies engaged in it, seems to foster an expectation of mobility in the initial career stages. Consequently, new graduates expect relocation to the North as part of their career paths.

Social Sciences, Management and Education

Vacancies in this category fell within all of the four general occupational groupings, with the majority in the first two categories. The type and location of the community was found to have a significant impact on vacancies and recruitment.

Scenario 1: Attrition

Most employers indicated that there would be some recruitment due to attrition, with the emphasis being on recruiting for projected vacancies for teaching positions requiring a French language component.

Scenario 2: New Economic Growth

Most interviewees hesitated to comment on this scenario. Most believed only a major project would impact recruiting policies for either 1987 or 1988.

General Questions

Most employers in this category were familiar with the program and regarded it positively. They believed that it was an asset to their recruiting programs, particularly in so far as it promotes the education of people with Northern experience.

Medicine and Health

This group was composed of hospital, health unit and two dental office administrators and projected vacancies fit into one of the four occupational categories with the attrition scenario.

Scenario 1: Attrition

Employers in this group emphasized that occupations in the "Very Difficult to Hire For" category were the source of the majority of their recruiting problems. Occupations in this category included: physio-therapists, occupational therapists, dental hygienists, speech therapists/speech pathologists/audiologists, pharmacists and baccalaureate degree/specialized skill nurses. This category required intensive and on-going recruitment efforts.

The remaining occupations in this group tended to be in the third and fourth categories, "moderately difficult" and "relatively easy", and required less intensive recruiting efforts by employers.

Scenario 2: New Economic Growth

Like the other occupational groupings, employers were unwilling to make predictions on the basis of Scenario 2.

General Questions

Replies to these questions indicate that the employers in this category have a high level of awareness of the bursary and a positive attitude toward it.

Conclusions

Certain common threads emerged from the study:

a) Employers are conservative in estimating manpower needs. This is particularly evident in the Science and Engineering category.

b) Employers generally indicated that by and large it is no longer difficult to attract graduates into the North.

c) Employers stressed the importance of hiring people familiar with the North. Respondents in the Medicine and Health category were particularly emphatic about this.

d) The closer the contact between the prospective employee and isolated conditions, the more important the need for employees with northern exposure.

e) The farther a community is away from Edmonton, the more difficult it is to fill positions, especially in more isolated communities and the hard-to-fill positions in medicine, health and specialized education.

f) A positive attitude toward the Bursary Program exists in theory. However, many people admitted they had limited experience with the program, and scant information about it.

g) Medicine and Health respondents indicated that upgrading is an important aspect of staff development and retention. This goes hand-in-hand with the importance of northern experience since it enables northerners to upgrade and apply their new skills to the North. Examples frequently given were RNs studying for their B.Sc. in nursing, and technicians studying for more advanced technical training.

h) The more skilled and more in demand the position, the more difficult it is to fill. Hence, X-ray technicians with a general one-year X-ray technical program are quite common but technicians with expertise in ultrasound are quite rare and are in high demand.

i) There is competition between the private and public sectors for a number of high-in-demand jobs. These include: dental hygienists, dental assistants, physiotherapists and pharmacists. The private sector has driven the remuneration for these positions above what is provided for in the existing collective agreements with the result that northern hospitals and health care units must compete with urban hospitals and health care units as well as with the private sector.

j) In education, French instruction and French immersion teachers are the positions which are most in demand and require out-of-province recruitment. The number of Alberta-educated French specialists is fewer than the demand. They tend to be attracted to urban, southern schools.

k) For most educators, recruitment is not a problem at the generalist level. The more specialized the training, the more difficult the recruitment. The only exception is recruitment for small, isolated schools. Turnover tends to be very high in these schools with few new teachers remaining beyond the two years required for certification.

l) Employers can now adapt to changing economic markets much more quickly. Unlike the late 70's, employers have the infrastructure and personnel in place to meet increases in demand when they occur. As well, they have a battery of qualified people to tap quickly when required.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

The Use and Disposition of Land in Alberta - A Discussion Paper

Written by: I.D. Systems Ltd.
Edmonton, Alberta

August, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

In February, 1987, the Elk Point Surface Rights Association (EPSRA) presented a brief to the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) concerning the protection of agricultural land and particularly the surface damage that occurs when agricultural lands are needed for oil and gas explorations. The EPSRA requested that the Council support a recommendation made by the Environmental Council of Alberta in 1984 following public hearings:

> That an Agricultural Resources Conservation Board (ARCB) be established, reporting to the Minister of Agriculture and charged with responsibility on behalf of the Government of Alberta for the conservation, maintenance, and enhancement of the agricultural land base.

The EPSRA felt there was a lack of a sole authority responsible for protecting Alberta's agricultural land base and wanted to implement an ARCB without delay. In response to these concerns I.D. Systems Ltd. was commissioned to review practical alternatives to oversee the use and disposition of land in Alberta. This report will summarize the existing land use situation in Alberta as it pertains to agriculture, identify problems, briefly describe alternatives already in use, evaluate these alternatives and make conclusions.

Principal Findings

Existing Situation

In Canada, the authority to plan the use of private and public lands is in the provincial domain. The Canadian Constitution, as opposed to the U.S. Constitution, does not guarantee property rights or compensation for those rights when taken by regulation. Most provinces, including Alberta, have assigned the authority to regulate land use to regional authorities and rural and urban municipal governments.

Agriculture competes for land use with other industries, including oil and gas, recreation, urban settlement, forestry, and so on. Three authorities are in place to allocate land use:

- Regional Planning Commissions
- Alberta Municipal Affairs
- Alberta Planning Board

As well, a number of government departments have mandates that include agriculture, but none of them have veto power over the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

There is no question agricultural land is being lost due to urban expansion, subdivisions, transportation systems and industrial development. New land is opened up, but it is usually of lesser quality than that being lost.

Problems

Four main problems were identified:

- The public does not perceive a problem with agricultural land. They see falling grain prices, world surpluses, and unlimited farmland.

- Good farmland is good for many other uses, including recreation and industrial development. There is much rezoning of agricultural land.

- There is public pressure for growth and development affecting job creation, tax revenue, and other economic development multipliers. Local officials play a major role in preservation but often give in to development and increased tax opportunities.

- Ultimately the farmers decide the use of agricultural land. They may be pressured to sell land for residential development or seek out the highest price when they retire.

Clearly, the problems of agricultural land use are complex.

Solutions

A number of potential solutions or alternatives were identified. The eight noted in the report are as follows:

Non-statutory Guidelines

In 1977 Ontario developed "Food Land Guidelines" to identify valuable farmland and require local governments to alter their land use plans to conform to agricultural goals. The guidelines are policy only and it is up to local and regional governments to enact and implement preservation strategies. There have been mixed results from the guidelines. The agricultural lands still feel the pressures of urgan growth and other land uses. A comprehensive provincial agricultural land preservation strategy in Alberta would be a start in putting more emphasis on agricultural values in Alberta's planning process.

Taxation

In Alberta and most provinces, agricultural land is taxed at its use-value whereby taxes are paid on the land's current use rather than its market use. A criticism of this is that it enables land owners to enjoy the benefits of an agricultural assessment, allowing them to convert the land to non-agricultural use with no penalty. There are two variations on this theme:

- Deferred taxes - If the land is converted to non-agricultural use, back taxes are assessed based on the non-agricultural use.

- Restrictive agreement - The landowner agrees to use the land only for agricultural purposes for a specified period of time, i.e., ten years, in return for specific tax benefits. Several years notice and repayment of benefits are required to break the agreement.

This option is not without problems. First, the financial benefits are minimal compared to the potential financial gain from development. Second, the program is open to abuse by developers holding the land at lower taxes until market conditions improve.

Development Rights

Developed in the United States, this concept allows the government to purchase the development rights to agricultural land. The title remains with the farmers, who are free to do with the land as they please, except to develop it or to sell it for any purpose other than agriculture. The agricultural land is preserved, but at great cost to the public.

Legislation

British Columbia was the first province to introduce legislation to preserve agricultural land. All land with a CLI rating of 1, 2, 3 or 4 was designated as an agricultural land reserve in 1972. The land was to be kept in agricultural use. An Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) was established as an appeal process. The program was well-received and over 80% of the land owners supported it. It provided farmers with security and long-term prospects.

Zoning

Zoning is the traditional mechanism to protect agricultural land in Alberta. In some areas only agricultural uses are permitted, while in others non-farming development can occur if certain criteria are met. A major drawback to zoning is that it can be quickly and easily rezoned by a local council. Given the pressures of needed tax incomes and pressure groups, the long-term preservation of agricultural land could easily be compromised.

Agriculture Districting

An Agriculture District is a voluntary association of adjacent land owners which enters into a contract with government to maintain agricultural production. They receive some benefits, such as lower property and state taxes. This program is based on the concept that if farmers voluntarily initiate the district, they will keep their land agricultural. There is still the pressure of the dollars available for their land for non-agricultural uses.

Agriculture Resources Conservation Board (ARCB)

If an Agriculture Resources Conservation Board were established, it would be similar to the Energy Resource Conservation Board (ERCB), and would have control over non-agricultural uses of agricultural lands. Application for non-agricultural uses of such lands would go to the ARCB which would hold public hearings and engage in research in order to determine what is in the best long-term public interest. The ARCB could provide leadership, education and coordination of the agricultural sector. However, is this function already being served by other departments, such as Alberta Agriculture? The ARCB concept is based on the premise that agricultural land is being wasted, lost and destroyed. However, the public's perception is of surpluses, low grain prices and agricultural land in excess of what is needed.

Several questions must be asked:

1. How much authority would the ARCB have?

2. Would there be compensation for farmers adversely affected?

3. Who would settle disputes between the ARCB and ERCB?

4. If there are conflicts, should other land uses also have their own boards?

Conclusions

There is a need for leadership and direction at senior levels of government. Provincial support for the preservation of agricultural land would make local government decisions concerning agricultural land easier. It is also essential to have public support of the need to protect farmland.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

A Report on the Sunrise Project

Written by: Harvey Research Ltd.
Sherwood Park, Alberta

August, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

In July, 1987, a brief was presented to the Northern Alberta Development Council by the Sunrise Project requesting assistance to fund an externai assessment of the project. The Sunrise Project had reached a juncture in its development and required a reassessment of its procedures, goals and objectives. As well, an evaluation was necessary in order to support any requests to establish a secure funding base for the project and to expand delivery of the program into smaller communities in north central Alberta.

The NADC agreed with an assessment and in support of the request provided the Sunrise Project with a grant to enable them to hire Harvey Research Ltd. to conduct the evaluation.

Objectives

Four objectives were identified for the study:

- To describe the Sunrise program
- To document the achievements of the program to date
- To recommend types of information to collect in the future to assist in measuring project success
- To identify areas for growth in terms of program operation

Methodology

Information and statistics were collected through two sources:

- An extensive review of documents for background information, including student statistics, policy manual and program summaries.

- Personal or telephone interviews with the Sunrise board, staff, students, and participating universities.

Principal Findings

The Sunrise Project

In November, 1981, an ad hoc committee was struck to explore the need for university courses in the Slave Lake area. A task force was established in 1982 which received funding from the Native Secretariat for a coordinator to develop a proposal for accessing university credit courses. In the fall of 1982, prospective students completed application forms for the University of Alberta and Athabasca University. The first courses were offered in January, 1983, in the United Church basement, with 17 full-time students.

The Sunrise Project has three objectives:

- To arrange for the delivery of post-secondary courses to Slave Lake and surrounding areas - primarily university and college credit courses.

- To ensure the provision of student support services for the programs offered including, but not necessarily limited to, coordination, instruction and counselling.

- To provide liaison between institutions delivering courses through the Society and the students enrolled in or wishing to enroll in those courses, and between the institutions themselves.

Approximately 32 students attend the Sunrise Project full-time each year. From January, 1983, to January, 1987, the project has enrolled 128 full-time and 78 part-time students.

Four full-time staff members are employed by the Sunrise Project: a coordinator, counsellor, tutor, and administrative assistant.

Students can take university courses from two institutions. Athabasca University courses can lead to degrees in administration, arts or general studies. University of Alberta courses can apply to degrees in arts, education, science, nursing, physical education, and recreation.

Sources of Funding

There have been three ongoing sources of support since the project began:

- Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council
- Community Vocational Centre, Slave Lake
- Alberta Vocational Centre, Grouard

Other sources of funds include Native Affairs and Native Secretariat.

Students receive financial support through a number of sources: Bands and the Lesser Slave Lake Regional Council, Student Finance Board, and the Northern Alberta Development Council student bursary program.

Measures of Program Success

Without exception, every individual interviewed said they thought the services offered by the Sunrise Project should continue to be offered in Slave Lake.

In terms of course completions for Sunrise students, the rate of completion for University of Alberta courses is 90%. Sunrise students complete Athabasca University courses at a rate of 58.6%, slightly higher than the Athabasca University average of 51%.

Depending on the degree sought, students can complete up to 60 credits (20 half courses) at Sunrise before they transfer to campus. Of the 128 full-time students, 31 had transferred to a university campus, with the majority moving to Edmonton. Of the 31 students who transferred to the University of Alberta, 20 have remained there or completed their degrees, five returned to Sunrise and six have discontinued the program.

The Sunrise project has a 43% withdrawal rate. Personal reasons were largely cited as reasons for leaving the program.

As of June, 1987, six Sunrise students had completed degrees, all from the University of Alberta. Two received a Bachelor of Education and four completed a three-year Bachelor of Arts. Nine additional students are eligible to graduate in 1988, following successful completion of their fourth year.

Areas for Development

The 13 students who were interviewed were asked in what ways the Sunrise program could help students more. Some suggestions include:

- More physical space
- Greater selection of courses
- More counselling services
- More preparation for on-campus study
- Tighter standards for class attendance
- More secure funding

Lists of courses offered by the schools, along with the number of students completing each course, should be kept up to date. Benchmarks, which reflect program objectives, need to be identified to evaluate and assess the program.

The Sunrise board members also noted areas for improvement. Categories include the "status" of the project, entrance requirements, project management, and program content.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The following four conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Sunrise Project is unique in northern Alberta in delivering a general university transfer program. A number of interested groups from the community have been able to work together to develop the project idea, to find funds to get the project started, and to continue to find funds on a yearly basis to keep the project alive. The University of Alberta, Athabasca University, Community Vocational Centre - Slave Lake, and Alberta Vocational Centre - Grouard, have all contributed in a major way to the project's success. For both native and non-native students unable to leave the Slave Lake area for a variety of reasons to begin a university program, the Sunrise Project has met a need.

2. The continued search for funds and related stress in locating funds occupies a considerable amount of board and staff time and causes concern for the students currently in the program.

3. The board has a number of decisions to consider in defining its role and the future direction of the program more clearly.

4. Some fine-tuning of the Sunrise Project itself would build on experience gained from the project to date.

In light of the above, five recommendations can be made:

1. The program should be maintained at its present level or increased to meet demand.

2. The program should be publicized throughout the area so that all potential students have equal access to information about the program.

3. The program deserves to be funded on an ongoing basis and recognized as a university service delivery program in its own right.

4. The decision areas discussed in the report should be addressed by the board at the earliest possible date.

5. Increased record-keeping, increased follow-up of students to campus, and increased scrutiny of course offerings for applicability to various degrees would bring more accountability to the project.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

A Study of Rainbow Lake Banking

Written by: Whyte Reynolds & Associates
Edmonton, Alberta

September, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background and Purpose

In June of 1987, representatives of the Rainbow Lake Chamber of Commerce presented a brief to the Northern Alberta Development Council outlining their concern about the lack of a full-range banking service in the New Town of Rainbow Lake.

The purpose of this study is to investigate and follow-up in response to the Chamber's plea for full-range banking services.

Methodology

Residents of Rainbow Lake, including businesspeople, community leaders, and banking clientele were interviewed. As well, banking institutions were surveyed for their criteria to warrant a full-service banking facility.

Principal Findings

Rainbow Lake Today

Rainbow Lake is located 143 kilometres west of High Level. As of June, 1987, Rainbow Lake had a population of 1,043. The New Town of Rainbow Lake is a resource community, producing predominantly light crude oil. A major employer, Canterra Energy Ltd., is just completing its 30th year of oil activity in Rainbow Lake. The town expects another 20 to 30 years of resource extraction. Although the resource base makes it vulnerable to the cyclical economics of this sector, the community has become more stable. Ten years ago the average stay in Rainbow Lake was less than two years; now the average residency is 4.7 years. Many others have been in the community for five to ten years. A significant number of improvements have occurred over the past ten years.

Banking in Rainbow Lake

The most pressing demand for banking services is cheque cashing. The second most common need is daily business deposits. Other banking activity is fairly typical: savings and chequing accounts, travellers cheques, and transferring monies.

Treasury Branch Agencies are run on contract. Except for a regular loan service and cheque certification, the operator in Rainbow Lake is able to offer all other banking services, including RRSPs, GICs, term deposits, money orders and travellers cheques. A Treasury Branch loans officer visits Rainbow Lake once a month.

Although there is general appreciation for the level of service provided by the Treasury Branch Agency, a number of concerns have been voiced. There are two major concerns:

1. There is a lack of privacy accorded to customers. All transactions at the counter can be observed by others in the line-up.

2. The Treasury Branch Agency typically has long line-ups extending well down the hallway.

Other minor concerns include the following:

- The hours of operation
- The maximum withdrawal of $500 per day unless 48 hours notice is provided
- The inability to purchase American Express travellers cheques (only Thomas Cooke travellers cheques are available)
- The inability to have cheques certified

The perceived demand by the Chamber of Commerce in Rainbow Lake is for a free-standing full-service banking facility. However, the actual demand is for privacy, faster service, extended hours, and a host of lesser wants.

The three banks in High Level - Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Treasury Branch, and Bank of Montreal - have examined a full-service operation in Rainbow Lake in harsh economic terms. An estimated $150,000 per year would be required for operational expenses, not including a branch manager. The $500,000 per month estimated payroll holds a maximum 2% return, generating just $10,000 per month for the bank. A $500,000 payroll requires $200,000 per month cash on hand. At a transportation fee of $7.45 per $1,000 shipped, the cost of shipping alone could be $1,500 per month. The bottom line is that a bank must be viable, that is, operate on a profitable basis.

A community of more than 1,000 people deserves a minimum level of service. It has often been stated that Rainbow Lake generates a great deal of income for the province. Perhaps the community can demand certain minimum services, regardless of the bottom line. It remains to ascertain whether or not the provision of a full-service bank in our society can be considered a form of essential service.

Recommendations

A general strategy is required to help the community come closer to its goal. Although a full-service bank is inevitable in the long-term, the challenge is to shorten that term.

- Localize more general business activity in Rainbow Lake.
- Residents and businesses should re-examine their needs for off-shore accounts and be encouraged to use the Treasury Branch Agency for all of their banking needs.
- The Chamber of Commerce should initiate a promotion of live, buy and invest in Rainbow Lake and encourage Assumption residents to support Rainbow Lake rather than High Level.
- The Chamber of Commerce should coordinate the collective efforts of the business community and support the Treasury Branch Agency's move to a larger facility.
- All of the banks should be invited to Rainbow Lake to discuss the community's banking needs and their requirements for attracting a bank.

The following is a summary prepared by the
Northern Development Branch
on

A Review of the Needs and Services in Loon, Peerless, and Trout Lakes Related to Substance Abuse

Written by: Garratt & Moore Associates Ltd.
Slave Lake, Alberta

November, 1987

Sponsored by: Northern Alberta Development Council

Background

In August, 1987, the Northern Alberta Development Council met in Loon Lake and Red Earth with residents of the area. A number of requests related to substance abuse were presented and a review of the area's needs, as they relate to alcohol and substance abuse, was deemed necessary.

Objectives

The study had four key objectives:

1. To provide an overview of community problems as they relate to substance abuse

2. To provide an overview of programs tried in the past or presently operating in the area with some indication of success

3. To provide a description of present needs and service gaps

4. To provide suggestions as to what will work in the community and what programs, if any, should be available

Methodology

An advisory committee was established, representing key agencies in the region, to monitor and review the development of the report. The study was sub-divided into four phases.

1. Study Phase
   - Literature review
   - Agency identification and classification of roles and responsibilities
   - Questionnaire preparation

2. Research Phase
   - Community visits
   - Agency interviews
   - Draft review with advisory committee

3. Strategy Development
   - Findings review with community and agency representatives
   - Recommmendation discussion with advisory committee

4. Final Report
   - Final report preparation and submission

Principal Findings

Through the past five years, many positive changes have occurred in the area of substance abuse: the community is more prepared to recognize the problems, professionals are more knowledgeable about its effects and treatments, more native staff are delivering programs, educational programs are available in the schools, and more social recreational programs for teens are available through enhanced community use of local facilities. Nonetheless, there is a growing concern about the extent of alcohol and chemical abuse in local communities. Agencies responsible for delivering services in this area agree that a need for increased services directed towards alcohol and chemical abuse exists.

From the information received and the comments of the front line personnel responsible for delivering a diversity of services into the three communities, it is tentatively concluded that:

1. Alcohol is the major substance of abuse. The majority of the problems are caused by a small number of young adults.

2. Solvent abuse is a chronic problem for only two or three individuals in each community.

3. A very limited number of children attending school have been identified who are at risk and who are probably experimenting with solvent use.

It is necessary to temper the above conclusions. Attempting to get a statistical analysis does not give a very complete picture of the problems in the communities. The community leaders have a different perception than that of the majority of front line personnel about the problems and the possible solutions. The following areas of community concern were noted:

1. The community is concerned about both alcohol use by adults and solvent use by youngsters.

2. The concern expands beyond substance abuse to a concern about the well-being of the entire family and includes numerous health, safety and developmental issues.

3. The community wants participation in any program or services delivered to its residents. The community is being treated like a "client" rather than a resource and an equal partner.

4. The community wishes to build on their strengths and focus on the positive.

5. The list of needs to address the problems include an expanded school gym, more jobs, better access to competent resource people, and access to treatment programs for the young.

Despite the lack of supporting data and too few discussions in the communities, the following are tentative statements about the community problems related to substance abuse.

1. Despite the few individuals identified as solvent abusers, the problem is more widespread and involves more youngsters than anyone knows.

2. The limited number of abusers is not the main issue. The goal is a sober community which is free from life-threatening chemical abuse.

3. If these three communities follow the alcohol and chemical abuse pattern seen in other native communities, the situation will get worse.

4. The communities are not empowered to deal effectively with what is a social problem. Families are providing the support and alternatives to combat this problem but active community support is vital to a solution.

At present, there are numerous agencies which have a presence in the three communities:

Native Counselling Services	Opportunity Corps
Northland School Division	Peace River Health Unit
Alberta Social Services	Athabasca Health Unit
Bigstone Band Social Services	Native Friendship Centre
Metis Association Regional Council	R.C.M.P.
Family & Community Support Services	A.A.D.A.C.

It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of each agency, but many of them are planning or implementing programs to address the needs of the communities. The gaps in service delivery, however, include a lack of coordination and cooperation among agencies, programs and personnel. The roles and responsibilities of each agency need to be clarified to the community and there is a need to include the community in the process and to understand its needs and wants.

Conclusions

The current, traditional model for delivering services treats the community as a client by retaining the decision-making authority, the management of services, and the staff outside of the community. The traditional model contrasts with new developments in the area of human services where the responsibility lies with the community which negotiates services from outside agencies. Alternative delivery models need to be examined, such as a mobile community treatment program. The native people must be involved and included from the beginning in the development of any such program.

If it is agreed that the problem of substance abuse is getting worse, it follows that the effectiveness of the providers must be seriously questioned. The issue is not one of individual performance but, rather, one of principle and philosophy.

The following four principles can guide both the review and development of new and existing services:

1. Programs should promote community and client self-sufficiency.

2. Service agencies should expect and support an increasing responsibility from the community to care for themselves and those in need of support.

3. Services should focus on the causes of social problems and be preventive in nature.

4. Services must involve the community and its residents in the design, implementation and operation of programs.

Practically, to increase the effectiveness of services or programs in these communities, the services must be community-based, educationally-based, preventive, and holistic, and must incorporate significant Native input at all levels.

Recommendations

All the agencies are trying hard and going the "extra bit" in order to address the needs of the communities. However, all agencies can improve their services by:

- Sharing resources such as information, goals and objectives, experience, and so on with other agencies, especially where common clients are involved

- Establishing community-based advisory committees including legitimate leaders of the community

- Allowing the community to participate as much as possible in the planning, development and implementation of the programs

- Incorporating culturally appropriate resources into programs and services